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'New threats sent to Saudi officials'

WASHINGTON (R) — Letters threatening violence against unspecified civilian targets were sent to the private, unlisted fax machines of several Saudi officials over the weekend, ABC-TV's "World News Tonight" reported on Monday. ABC quoted unnamed intelligence sources as saying the calls came to the fax machines of King Fahd's private secretary, the head of Saudi intelligence and Interior Minister Prince Nayef. The messages, traced to public phones in Riyadh, threatened civilian targets unless several Saudi religious leaders were released from jail along with 230 other Saudi citizens arrested for their participation in a rare public protest in 1994, the network reported. The fax messages came less than a week after a massive truck bomb ripped apart a U.S. military dormitory at an air force base near Dhahran, killing 19 Americans and injuring hundreds more. It was not immediately clear whether the threats were linked in any way to the June 25 bombing.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية والرأي

Mandela to visit Israel in August

TEL AVIV (R) — South African President Nelson Mandela will pay his first post-apartheid visit to Israel next month, the foreign ministry said on Tuesday. Mr. Mandela will arrive on Aug. 19 for a 2-1/2-day visit, a spokesman said. He will also visit Palestinian President Yasser Arafat. Mr. Mandela's African National Congress for decades identified with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Israel's former arch-enemy led by Mr. Arafat, while the ANC struggled against white-ruled South African rule. Israel officially opposed apartheid. But facing world criticism over its treatment of Palestinians, Israel shared a sense of isolation with South Africa. Israel's groundbreaking peace deal with the PLO in 1993 coincided with the scrapping of apartheid rule, paving the way for a thaw in relations between the ANC and the Jewish state. South African Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo visited Israel last September and declared his government's desire to forge strong ties.

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Price: Jordan 150 Fils

King, Arafat to meet Saturday Abbas: Meeting with Israeli PM soon

GAZA CITY (Agencies) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat is to visit Jordan Saturday for talks on the Arab-Israeli peace process, aides said Tuesday. Mr. Arafat will meet His Majesty King Hussein to discuss the situation in the region after the landmark Arab summit held in Cairo on June 22-23. Mr. Arafat's advisor Nabil Abu Rudeina said.

Twenty-one Arab leaders at the summit urged Israel's new right-wing government to return occupied land in exchange for peace or risk plunging the Middle East into renewed conflict.

On Tuesday Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti met with Mahmoud Abbas, the architect of the 1993 declaration of principles for Palestinian autonomy.

Mr. Kabariti reaffirmed Jordan's support for the

Palestinians in their final negotiations with Israel, stalled since they were opened in May in Egypt.

Mr. Abbas called on the new Israeli government "to respect the past accords with the Palestinian National Authority, notably concerning the Israeli withdrawal from Hebron."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has postponed a decision on implementing a partial pull-back from 80 per cent of the West Bank town of Hebron, which is already three months behind schedule.

Mr. Abbas said a meeting between Mr. Arafat and Mr. Netanyahu "will be held soon, probably after Netanyahu's trip to the United States."

Mr. Netanyahu will travel to Washington on July 8 for talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton and other offi-

cials on Middle East peace and bilateral ties.

Mr. Abbas, better known as Abu Mazen, said he had two meetings with envoys of Mr. Netanyahu since the elections.

"Relations between us and the Likud government have started, first with a telephone conversation between me and Mr. Dore Gold (Netanyahu's political advisor), followed by a meeting between us before the (June 21-23) Arab summit in Cairo."

"Several days after, two envoys met brother Yasser Arafat with a letter from Netanyahu," Mr. Abbas said. Israeli and Palestinian sources said last Friday Mr. Gold and another Israeli met Mr. Arafat in the self-ruled Gaza Strip.

In Cairo, a senior Palestinian official said Mr. Netanyahu has asked to be

given time before meeting with Mr. Arafat.

"The two advisors of the Israeli prime minister who met with Arafat asked for a delay before launching Israeli-Palestinian contacts," said Selim Al Zaanoun, president of the parliament-in-exile, the Palestinian National Council (PNC).

The Palestinian representative to the Arab League Mohammad Sobaih on Saturday urged Mr. Netanyahu to meet "swiftly" with Mr. Arafat saying "any delay in such a meeting would undermine the peace process and is not in the interests of either of the two parties."

Arab leaders have voiced concern at Mr. Netanyahu's victory in the May 29 polls fearing his policy guidelines ruling out further territorial concessions to the Arabs could derail the peace process.



CHILDREN'S CONGRESS: Her Majesty Queen Noor greets Arab children Monday night at the opening ceremony of the 16th annual Arab Children's Congress (See related story on page 3) (Photo by George Crystal)

Rafsanjani pledges 'friendly' ties with Gulf states

TEHRAN (Agencies) — President Ali Akbar Rafsanjani on Tuesday pledged "friendly" ties between Iran and its Gulf neighbours in a meeting with Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa.

Mr. Rafsanjani praised Syria's "humanitarian efforts" in seeking to mediate in a dispute between Iran and Bahrain.

"Iran has always pursued a policy of good neighbourly relations with the region's countries without interference from foreigners," he said, in comments faxed in AFP from his office, referring to the presence of Western forces in the Gulf.

"We seek friendly cooperation to continue toward peace and stability."

Mr. Sharaa, who arrived here Monday from Bahrain, praised Tehran for "cooperating to restore friendship between the region's countries."

Iran has been accused by Bahrain of trying to topple the government in Manama and of being behind the violence which has rocked the Gulf archipelago since December 1994, claiming 22 lives. Tehran fiercely denies the accusations.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati told Iran News daily on Tuesday that Syria was also acting as a go-between to improve relations between Iran and Egypt.

"Syria is trying to create a coordinated front among Muslim countries, particularly in the region, to counter a common enemy," he said referring to Israel. Damascus wants to "pave the way for better cooperation between Iran and Arab countries."

He (Sharaa) pointed out that Iran plays an important role in the strengthening of regional security and stability and that it attaches great importance to neighbourly relations and cooperation with the regional Arab states. IRNA said late on Monday in a report about the two ministers' meeting.

The Syrian minister

Israeli PM: Madrid does not include 'land-for-peace'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday threw the principle of land-for-peace into doubt, saying it was not the basis for the Middle East peace process as Arab states insist.

"I don't agree that the Madrid conference includes land-for-peace," Mr. Netanyahu said of the 1991 conference that launched Arab-Israeli peace talks.

An Arab summit in Cairo last month urged Israel to trade occupied Arab land-for-peace or risk plunging the Middle East into renewed conflict.

The 21 Arab leaders at the summit also warned they would "reconsider steps taken towards Israel in the context of the peace process" if Mr. Netanyahu abandoned the land-for-peace principle.

The right-wing Israeli leader, speaking at the press briefing for foreign correspondents, acknowledged that the Madrid con-

ference backed U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 calling on Israel to surrender occupied Arab land.

But he added: "We have our own interpretation" of the resolutions.

"We will negotiate" with Arab countries, he said. "I don't know what will come out of the negotiations. We will go with our demands. They will come with their demands. But they cannot force their demands on us."

Mr. Netanyahu has angered Arab leaders by ruling out an Israeli surrender of the Golan Heights, captured from Syria in 1967, the creation of a Palestinian state and any discussion over the future of Jerusalem.

Syrian President Hafez Assad said his country will not resume its on-off peace talks with Israel if the Golan is not on the negotiating table.

But Mr. Netanyahu said: "We will negotiate. All the parties have to come to the

table."

He said he would make his first visit to Egypt and Jordan as prime minister after he returns from the United States next week.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said during a visit to France Monday: "The basis of the principle of land-for-peace must be maintained."

Mr. Netanyahu also insisted on his "security first" approach to peace talks with the Palestinians.

Asked whether he intends to meet Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, Mr. Netanyahu said: "I said this before, if this is necessary for the security I will." He has avoided even mentioning Mr. Arafat by name since his May 29 election.

And he again called on the Palestinians to respect their side of the Oslo autonomy accords before Israel keeps its commitments.

"There has been many

Rifkind briefs Saudis on plans to eradicate 'terrorism'

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia (AFP) — British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind Tuesday briefed Saudi officials on proposals to stop "terrorists" planning attacks from their countries of asylum a week after the Khobar bombing.

"We share the anger of our Saudi and American friends at the atrocious incident in the last week," Mr. Rifkind told a press conference, after holding talks with his Saudi counterpart Prince Saud Al Faisal.

Mr. Rifkind, who arrived from Lyon, France, where he attended a G-7 summit said world leaders had expressed the need for an "unprecedented degree of international cooperation" to stamp out terrorism.

In his talks he discussed ways of closing what he called a loop-hole in a 1951 international convention on refugees which was signed in accordance with a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. Rifkind maintained the convention allowed "terrorists" to operate freely from the countries where they had been given asylum.

The British proposal would deny asylum to any individual who was inciting terrorists or actually helping terrorists," he said.

The 24-hour visit comes a week after a huge truck-bomb tore off the facade of a military dormitory at the King Abdul Aziz Air Base in Khobar, near the eastern city of Dhahran, killing 19 U.S. servicemen and wounding hundreds of people.

British and French troops are also housed at the compound but none were hurt in the blast set off by a truck packed with between 1,500 to 2,500 kilograms of explosives.

The U.S. embassy said it had received threats of attacks before the bombing at the base, which is also used by British and French troops. None were hurt in the explosion.

Britain and the United States both received threats before a bombing in Riyadh in November demanding their forces leave the kingdom.

The November attack on a U.S. army training premises which killed five Americans and two Indians was claimed by two shadowy groups. Four Islamic militants were

later beheaded for the attack, although it was not disclosed if they belonged to any group.

Concrete barriers have been placed outside the British and U.S. embassies in Riyadh since the Riyadh blast. U.S. and British citizens have also been advised to take precautions.

Mr. Rifkind said he had discussed "very briefly" the case of leading Saudi opposition figure Mohammad Al Masaari who lives in Britain, although he added: "It is clearly agreed it is irrelevant to our relations."

The British government has tried several times to expel Mr. Masaari, as his opposition to the Saudi leadership has soured Anglo-Saudi ties. The Home Office argued that his presence was endangering huge arms contracts with Saudi Arabia.

However, Mr. Masaari took his case to the courts and in April won a four-year reprieve.

On Thursday Mr. Masaari, who heads the Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights which is banned in Saudi Arabia, told BBC

Netanyahu: No separation from Palestinians Israeli army urges relaxation of blockade

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Tuesday that his policy would not be to separate the Palestinians from Israel as was advocated by the previous government.

Mr. Netanyahu, speaking to Israel's Foreign Press Association, said he would prefer to keep relations between the two peoples as open as possible.

He declined, however, to say when he would take steps to lift the four-month closure that has kept tens of thousands of Palestinians from work inside Israel.

Mr. Netanyahu also said he planned to visit Egypt and Jordan after his visit next week to the United States, but did not give dates.

Meanwhile, Israeli army officials have called for an easing of the crippling four-month-old closure of the Palestinian territories to avoid an explosion of anger there, a military source said Tuesday.

Senior officers asked Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai to double the

number of Palestinian workers allowed into Israel to work in order to ease the disastrous effect of the closure on the Palestinian economy.

The new right-wing government is to discuss the army proposal this week, Israel Radio reported.

However, police are reluctant to recommend a relaxation of the closure, which was imposed in February at the start of a wave of Islamic suicide bombings in Israel which killed 58 people.

"It's natural that the army should be mainly concerned with the situation in the territories which could become explosive, whereas for the police the security of Israel comes before everything else," Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani told the radio.

"In the absence of a final settlement with the Palestinians, I expect a new wave of attacks" by Palestinian militants, Mr. Kahalani said.

Mr. Netanyahu has slightly eased the total closure of the territories since

he was elected premier on May 29, to allowing 27,000 Palestinians into Israel every day.

Generals Uzi Dayan and Schlomo Yanai, commanders of Israel's central and southern regions, and the head of the Shin Bet internal security service, Ami Ayalon, have asked that the number of Palestinian work permits be upped to 70,000, military sources said.

That would bring the number of permits back to its pre-February level. However, restrictions on those allowed into Israel would remain.

Only married men aged over 25 would be eligible for the permits as they are considered less likely to be recruited by Islamic fundamentalist groups as suicide bombers.

The Israeli authorities initially saw the blockade both as a means to defend against attacks and to pressure the Palestinians to take action "themselves" against Islamic militants.

Since March 4 there have been no large bomb attacks

in the Jewish state.

However, security officers now fear the anger caused by the closure could backfire, while Mr. Netanyahu's Likud Party see its relaxation as a goodwill gesture to the Palestinians that would require no political concessions.

Palestinians say they have lost \$300 million in earnings since restrictions on entry into Israel were first imposed two years ago.

Unemployment also jumped 10 points last year to reach 39.2 per cent in the Gaza Strip and 24.3 per cent in the West Bank, according to the Palestinian statistics agency.

An advisor to Mr. Netanyahu, Gideon Ezra, Monday recommended lifting completely the closure.

Arguing that the blockade was not an effective security measure, Mr. Ezra said: "I think the Arabs in Gaza and the West Bank should have access to their source of income."

Abu Marzouk denounces Saudi bombing

CAIRO (AFP) — A top Hamas official jailed in the United States on Tuesday condemned the bombing of a U.S. military base in Saudi Arabia which killed 19 soldiers, in an interview with the Arab daily Al Hayat.

Musa Abu Marzouk, the head of Hamas' political bureau, distanced the hard-line Palestinian movement from the June 25 Khobar bombing, saying it was "a politically desperate act of violence."

Speaking from his New York prison, Mr. Abu Marzouk said Hamas was "prepared to cooperate with the Saudi authorities to trace the Khobar bombers" but added that it was unlikely the movement could be of real help.

Erbakan warms towards U.S.

ANKARA (Agencies) — Turkey's new Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan pledged Tuesday to boost cooperation with the United States, giving another signal of brushing aside his previous hardline and anti-Western rhetoric.

In his first diplomatic talks with a foreign delegation since he took office last Friday, Mr. Erbakan met visiting U.S. Undersecretary for Political Affairs at the State Department Peter Tarnoff and a senior Pentagon official.

"Prime Minister Erbakan told the meeting that he would work hard to further improve the Turkish-American friendship and cooperation," the premier's spokesman Abdullah Gul said after the talks.

Mr. Gul said Mr. Erbakan had also expressed Turkey's concerns regarding a U.S.-led multinational force based in Turkey and designed to protect the Kurds of northern Iraq from potential threats by Baghdad.

Operation Provide Comfort was created in 1991 in the wake of the Gulf war. It

now consists of an air wing based in southern Turkey and a military coordination centre in Zakhu in northern Iraq.

Turkey, which spearheaded the creation of Operation Provide Comfort at the time, now complains that the force has been acting beyond Ankara's control. Nationalist circles even claim that the force assists separatist Turkish Kurds based in northern Iraq.

Turkey has asked the other participants of the force — the United States, France and Britain — to accept changes to the force's command structure, but talks have so far given no results.

"The prime minister mentioned Turkey's concerns on Provide Comfort and has also asked the removal of the military coordination centre from northern Iraq," Mr. Gul said.

"Our mutual cooperation should not encourage terrorist activities but prevent them," Mr. Erbakan told Mr. Tarnoff and Jan Lodai, principal deputy undersec-

retary of defence for policy.

Mr. Erbakan asked that the mission's military coordination unit inside Iraq be transferred to Turkey, according to a statement to reporters.

The U.S. administration sees the unit as essential for coordinating the work of some 30 organisations providing humanitarian aid to Iraqi Kurds.

Mr. Erbakan said he would consult with the Turkish military leaders, who generally support the task force.

"We are working actively so that it is possible for the Turkish parliament to renew the mandate of the force on terms acceptable both to Turkey and the U.S.," Mr. Tarnoff told reporters.

Mr. Erbakan also told the visiting U.S. officials that a U.N. refugee camp, Atrush, in northern Iraq had become a Kurdish guerrilla base and "must be closed." The United Nations has denied the allegations.

Egyptian minister pours cold water on 'exciting' gum

DUBAI (R) — A tanker carrying the bodies of two Filipino sailors and a Romanian who died in Gulf waters on Saturday was still trying to dock in the Gulf Arab emirate of Dubai on Tuesday, Dubai shipping sources said. Two Filipino sailors were killed when their lifeboat failed in an attempt to rescue the crew of a fire-stricken cargo ship. The engine fire on the Romanian-registered Nicoresti killed its Romanian chief engineer, shipping sources said. A search for two Polish crewmen who served with the two Filipinos on the Japanese-flagged gas tanker Co-Op Sunrise and took part in the failed rescue attempt was continuing, a Polish embassy official in Abu Dhabi said. The embassy named the missing men as Jaroslaw Andrzejewski and Lefzek Jarosz. "The agents are trying to negotiate with the Dubai immigration authorities to take the Co-Op Sunrise into Port Rashid in Dubai," a shipping source in Dubai said. "They are worried about the condition of the corpses."

MAN, Burma — HHK
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16:20Algiers (AH)	17:20Sharjah (AH)	
19:00Dubai (EK)	20:00Dubai (EK)	
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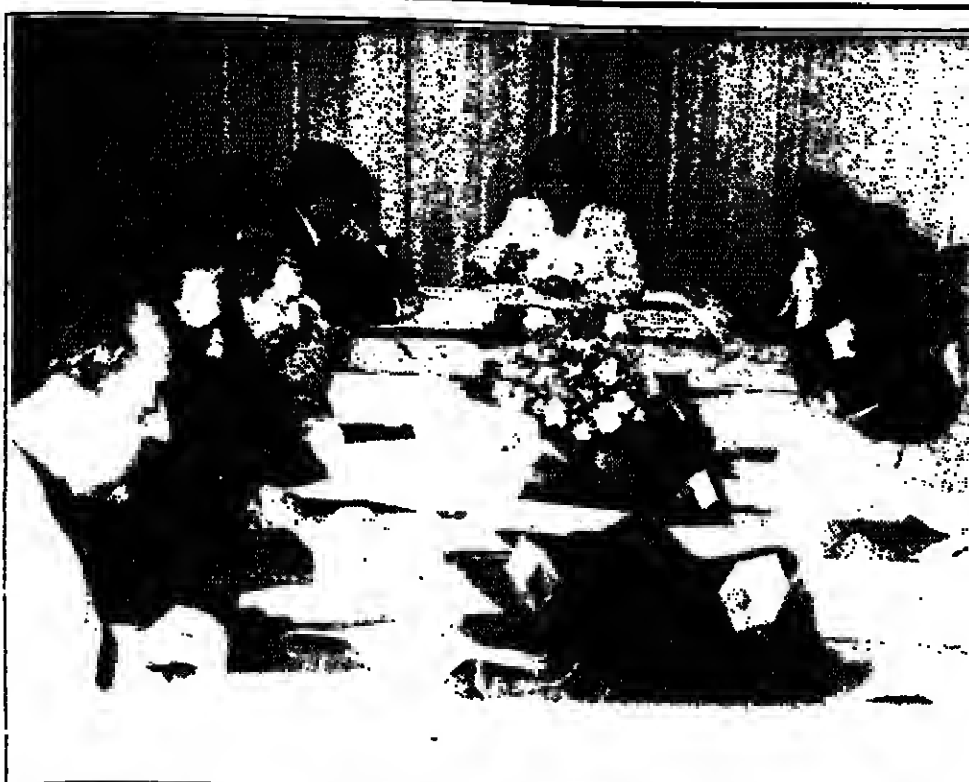
MARKET PRICES	
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Apricot	750/500
Apple	700/500
Banana	600/600
Banana (imported)	880/660
Cabbage	130/80
Carrot	140/80

1:13:45	Amsterdam, New York	Eggplant	220/150
		Garlic	650/400(R)
2:12:10	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)	Lemon	800/550
2:12:45Istanbul (RJ)	Marrow (large)	150/100
20:20:20Colombo (RJ)	Marrow (small)	250/160
20:45Beirut (RJ)	Mulukhiyah	120/70
21:10Riyadh (RJ)	Onion (dry)	130/80
21:10Cairo (RJ)	Okra	850/600
21:20New Delhi (RJ)	Orange	400/300
21:30	Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)	Pea	500/350
23:45Sanaa (RJ)	Peach	600/400
24:15Muscat (RJ)	Pepper (hot)	340/220
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24:00Amsterdam (KL)	Potato	290/180
28:45Beirut (ME)	String Bean	450/300
29:15London (BA)	Sweet melon	300/200
3:00Sanaa (IYY)	Tomato	130/60

Petra (Petra) — Figures here show that 16,500 people (Jordanians and foreign nationals) visited the ancient city of Petra during the state treasury year ending 1996, earning JD 276,400 in entry fees.

Archaeological Department Office Director at Petra Suleiman al-Farajat said the site was visited by 218,297 people in the first six months of 1996 earning the country nearly JD 4 million. Visitors to the national heritage site in Petra numbered 189,175, earning during that period JD 1,991 million.

Mr. Far attracting a visitor only for neighbors but many are travel according to most visitors at night in Petra region. He said the country bring even in the summer months. Mousa includes hotel room



HRH Princess Basma Tuesday chairs a meeting of the National Committee On Women's Affairs to discuss proposed amendments to the citizenship, passports and civil status laws aimed at eliminating any form of discrimination against women (Petra Photo)

National women's panel discusses amendments to 'discriminatory' laws

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Princess Basma Tuesday chaired a meeting of the National Committee on Women's Affairs, dedicated to discussing proposed amendments to the citizenship, passports and civil status laws aimed at eliminating any form of discrimination against women.

Princess Basma thanked the chairman and members of the legal committee in charge of examining the proposed amendments for their efforts in reviewing the laws and preparing the best formulas to abolish discriminatory elements in these laws.

Committee Chairman Abdul Karim Dughmi, who is also minister of justice, reviewed the proposed

amendments to the civil status, citizenship, passports, marriage and divorce related laws, in addition to other issues affecting women's daily lives.

Mr. Dughmi said the amendments will be presented to the Cabinet for review and the legal process required to endorse them.

The committee also reviewed the actions taken thus far to implement the recommendations and resolutions made at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing last September.

Later, the coordinating committee of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who act in affiliation with the National

Committee on Women's Affairs, joined the meeting and presented several proposals on the Election Law.

The meeting was attended by Ministers of Planning Rima Khalaf-Huneidi, Minister of Social Development Hammad Abu Jamous, the secretaries general of the ministries of Labour, Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment, and Interior, in addition to Executive Director of Noor Al Hussein Foundation Ibrahim Badran, Princess Basma's advisor for Women's Affairs Shadia Nuseir, and representatives of various women's organisations in the country.

Prosecutors present evidence in subversion trial Defence prepares to present argument

By Rana Hosseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Prosecutors at the State Security Court Tuesday presented evidence at the trial of two men accused of plotting to carry out acts of sabotage and summed up their case opening the way for the defence to begin its argument.

Salem Abdullah Jaradat and Ahmad Qassem, both 22, are charged with plotting to carry out extremist attacks, manufacturing and possession of illegal arms and hand-made explosives.

The defendants are currently also being tried at the Amman Criminal Court on charges of shooting and wounding the former second secretary at the French embassy, Gilles Heine who was visiting a scenic area in Wadi Mujib with his wife.

Testifying for the prosecution was Captain Mohammad Khalyeh of the Criminal Laboratory Department who told the court that he examined the bullet that struck Mr. Heine and said it came from a 9-calibre gun. The weapon seized from the defendants was a 7-calibre gun, he added.

He said he retrieved three 9-calibre spent shells and one old 7-calibre spent shell from the crime scene.

"The 7-calibre shell was old and rusty and was used a long time ago," he told the courtroom.

He also said that he found three beverage bottles filled with gasoline, three pipes filled with sulphur, two 9-volt batteries, one electrical switch and three light bulbs filled with sulphur.

Explosives expert Capt. Ali Ensour told the court that the confiscated explosives are fatal because they are in good condition and can cause extensive injury or death to humans and

damage to property.

Capt. Nayef Jaloudi told the military tribunal that he saw the French diplomat struggling with a man who was holding a gun.

"I asked the attacker to throw his gun, and when he did not comply with my orders I fired two bullets into the air to scare him. Then a second man lifted a bottle and threw it at me, but missed," Capt. Jaloudi said.

The police officer told the court that the top of the bottle was stuffed with a burning rag and was filled with gasoline (a Molotov cocktail) "but it did not ignite."

He added that after a short struggle with the two assailants, security officers were able to overcome them and make their arrests.

State prosecutor Lieutenant Colonel Mahmoud Obeidat asked the court to include the written testimonies of the victims, which were read out in court Tuesday, in the trial record as "they could not appear to testify because they are out of the country."

Lieut. Col. Obeidat also asked the court to include the testimonies of the two defendants in the record.

Defence attorneys Saleh Arnouti and Hikmat Rawashdeh contested the prosecutor's request, claiming that their clients were interrogated under duress.

The military tribunal, presided over by Colonel Youssef Faouri and including Judges Major Salem Saoudi and Lieut. Col. Aref Suif, rejected the defence's plea.

The defence asked the court for time to prepare their witnesses in the case, adding that their clients want to testify in their own case.

At the end of the court session, Judge Faouri set Sept. 8, to start hearing the

Bishops meet to discuss Jerusalem issue

AMMAN (Petra) — Bishops representing the Evangelical Episcopal Churches in Asia opened a week-long meeting in Amman Tuesday to discuss the status of Jerusalem and related spiritual issues.

Bishops from Jordan and 19 other countries will discuss the positive effect of the "religious awakening" among followers of all faiths, the importance of Jerusalem to Jews, Muslims and Christians and the rights of monotheistic religions in the holy city, according to Archbishop Samir Qafeti who is responsible for Evangelical Episcopal activities in Jordan and the entire Middle East.

The archbishop said it is important that no single party among these three monotheistic religions be in sole control of the Holy City as the city will lose its sacred character under an exclusive power. He

stressed that Jerusalem should remain a symbol of equality and peaceful coexistence at all levels including sovereignty.

He said that at the Amman meeting entitled, "Asia Region-Pre Lambeth Regional Conference," and held to prepare for a world meeting of the churches in Lambeth, England, delegates will stress Christian unity, not as a front against any other religion, but as a force to strengthen the spiritual values of humanity.

Archbishop Qafeti said the meeting will reaffirm the resolutions of the 1988 Lambeth meeting that called for settling the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by allowing the Palestinians to set up their own independent state.

Furthermore, the meeting will prepare a comprehensive report which will be submitted to the 1998 Lambeth meeting which will be

attended by all Anglican bishops in the world representing 70 million people.

The archbishop said that the Lambeth and Amman meetings will reassert the churches' protection of human rights, reject all forms of racial or ethnic discrimination and extremism, support the utilisation of technology for the benefit of humankind, and encourage the exploitation of natural wealth in the world to help reduce Third World countries' debts.

He said that the participating bishops will submit working papers reflecting the views of their own churches noting that the meeting is attended by bishops from Jordan, Jerusalem, Lebanon, Syria, Pakistan, Iran, Sri Lanka, India, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and Israel.

Industrial projects to show at Sanaa fair

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian industrial products ranging from pharmaceuticals to home and office furniture will go on display during a week-long industrial fair in Sanaa, Yemen in September, according to an announcement by the Jordan Trade Association (JTA).

The JTA is organising the fair in cooperation with the Jordan Exports Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO) and said it hopes that the event will help market Jordan's products in Yemen and will give Jordanian businessmen an opportunity to conclude trade deals with Yemeni merchants, according to the announcement.

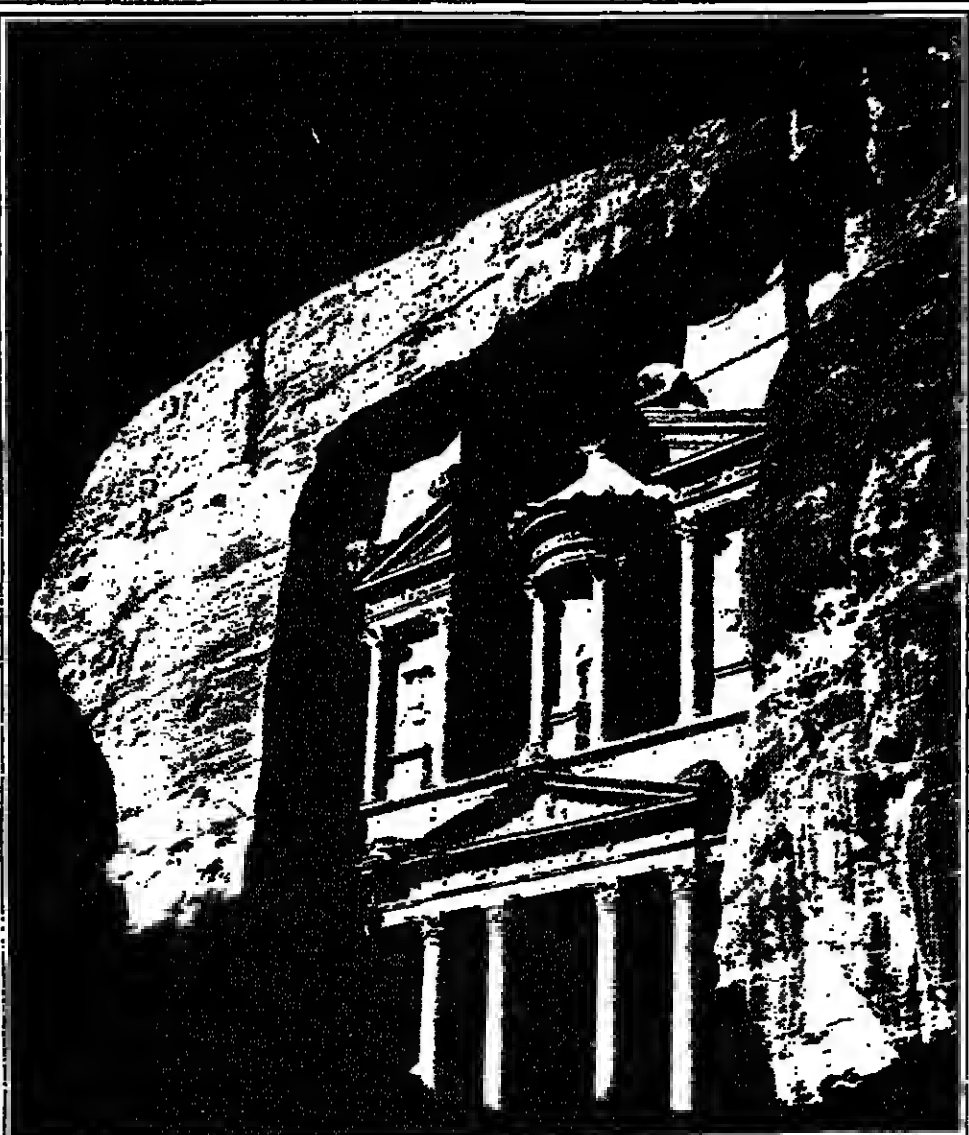
It said that the JTA will extend an invitation to the private sector companies and Yemeni officials to visit the fair planned for Sept. 21 through 27 in order to inspect Jordanian products.

The statement said a large number of Jordanian businesses and companies will take part, adding that Yemen constitutes a lucrative market for Jordanian products.

According to the JTA, commodities such as medicines, agricultural equipment, foodstuffs, stationery, school and sports requirements, underwear, clothing, leather products, cosmetics, electrical appliances and furniture will be on display.

The announcement came on the eve of a two-day meeting to start in Amman today by the Higher Jordanian-Yemeni Committee, co chaired by the prime ministers of both countries.

Yemeni Prime Minister Ali Abdullah Saleh is due here Wednesday at the head of a large delegation of ministers and other officials to take part in the meeting which will discuss boosting bilateral cooperation in trade exchanges, health, agriculture, fisheries, electricity, other energy, mining, postal and telecommunications services, education, culture, youth and sports.



Al Khazneh in Petra (photo by Tareq Sha'er)

Petra records 16,500 visitors in June; revenues reach JD 276,400

PETRA (Petra) — Figures for June show that 16,500 people (Jordanians and foreign nationals) visited the ancient city of Petra earning the state treasury JD 276,400 in entry fees, said Archaeological Department Office Director at Petra Suleiman Farajat.

Mr. Farajat said the site was visited by 218,297 people in the first six months of 1996 earning the country nearly JD 4 million. Visitors to the national heritage site in 1995 numbered 189,175; fees earned during that year amounted to JD 1,991

million.

Mr. Farajat said Petra is attracting greater numbers of visitors by the day, not only from abroad and neighbouring countries, but many more Jordanians are travelling to the area.

According to Mr. Farajat, most of the foreign visitors spend one to three nights at the hotels in the Petra region.

He said he hoped that the coming months will bring even more increases in the numbers of visitors, pointing out that the Wadi Mousa region which includes Petra has 1500 hotel rooms.

Last month Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Saleh Irsheidat said Petra and its surrounding areas will next year witness major infrastructure and services projects designed to provide better facilities for the growing number of visitors.

He said a Japanese team of specialists has completed a study which pointed to the lack of infrastructure services at the tourists sites, adding that Jordan needs to improve such services if it is to have a larger share of the competitive international tourism market.

Children's congress delegates visit RSS, Haya Arts Centre

AMMAN (Petra) — Young participants to the 16th Arab Children's Congress started their activities Tuesday with a visit to the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) where they attended several workshops, toured the various departments of the society and listened to briefings on the work conducted at each department.

RSS Vice President Said Alloush accompanied the children and noted that the RSS offers scientists and experts an opportunity to conduct research and thus make progress in development, especially in the industrial sectors of Jordan.

The children later visited the Haya Arts Centre where they met its director, Nabih Riyal, who outlined the 20-year-old centre's various activities and programmes for children.

The youngsters attended a workshop at the centre and presented Mr. Riyal

and Dr. Alloush with token gifts of appreciation.

Her Majesty Queen Noor opened the 16th Arab Children's Congress at the Roman Amphitheatre Monday evening. The participating children from 10 Arab countries watched a play entitled "Li Ajhlihem," a folklore musical performed by the Jordan Armed Forces Band.

During the one-week of activities, the children are scheduled to visit schools as well as cultural and scientific institutions.

Initiated by Queen Noor after the 1980 Arab summit in Amman, the Arab Children's Congress aims at bringing together children from around the Arab World to participate in a programme of cultural activities, discussions and to visit historical sites and development projects in Jordan.

WHAT'S GOING ON

Seventh Fuhes Festival

* Concert by Iraqi singer Sa'adoun Jabbar at 9:00 p.m.
 * Seminar (Arabic) entitled "The Arab Woman and the Challenges of the Age" with the participation of Linda Matar, Tagrid Hikmat, and Narm Abu Nidal at 6:30 p.m.
 * Poetry recital of Bedouin heritage at the courtyard of the Orthodox Church Museum at 8:00 p.m.
 * Exhibition on Arab cities, Jordanian figures, Arab press, books, hand-made products, and others.

MUSIC RECITAL

* Recital of memorable chamber music (presenting pieces by Corelli, Handel, Faour, Saint-Saens and others) at College de la Salle, Jabal Al Hussein at 8:00 p.m.

FILM

* "The Elephant Man" at the British Council at 7:00 p.m.

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Whitewater, 'filegate' cuts Clinton's lead over Dole

WASHINGTON (Agencies)

The Whitewater investigation and the widening scandal over the White House's access to FBI files have eroded President Bill Clinton's lead over his Republican rival Bob Dole, according to a Washington Post-ABC News poll.

Mr. Clinton's lead, a 54 to 40 per cent lead over Sen. Dole in the June 27-30 poll, compared to a 22 per cent advantage in a similar survey conducted in mid-May, the daily said Tuesday.

However, the gap among people who said they would vote in the Nov. 5 presidential elections was even narrower 10 percentage points — 53 to 43 per cent in favour of Mr. Clinton, down from 23 points in the mid-May survey.

The growing scandals involving the Clintons and the White House staff has also taken a toll in the president's credibility, with 56 per cent of those surveyed considering that the White House's actions in "filegate" were "an intentional abuse of power."

The Whitewater investigation is also taking its toll, with those believing the president probably broke the law for the first time outnumbering those who thought he did not by 46 to 44 per cent.

In a similar survey in March, 48 per cent believed the president was not involved in any wrongdoing against 43 per cent who did.

And for the first time in the Post-ABC poll, less than half of those surveyed (42 per cent) believed the president was "mainly telling the truth" about Whitewater against 49 per cent who dis-

agreed.

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton has also taken a hit in the latest survey, with almost 60 per cent believing she was not telling the whole truth about Whitewater and 53 per cent suspecting she did something illegal.

President Clinton's approval rating, paradoxically, continued to grow. For the first time in a year more Americans (51-45 per cent) approved of the way he was handling the U.S. economy, and 52 per cent approved his handling of foreign affairs.

Interviewed by Cable News Network (CNN) on his campaign plane, Sen. Dole said he believed the margin was too high and that the real gap was between eight and 10 percentage points.

Sen. Dole also told reporters in Atlantic City, New Jersey, "we feel we are starting to close the gap here. It feels good. I think the race is tightening with or without the FBI files."

Meanwhile the White House Monday stepped up its campaign to discredit a scandal book about President Bill Clinton and challenged Republican Bob Dole to disavow any link with it.

White House spokesman Mike McCurry called the book another example of a "non-stop smear campaign" by Republicans against Mr. Clinton and said Sen. Dole should disavow the book personally.

"It would be a surprise to us if Senator Dole didn't indicate that the activity of one of his paid advisers with respect to this book is unacceptable. I assume he'll

do that and do it promptly," Mr. McCurry told White House reporters.

The Dole campaign has laughed off White House attempts to tie it to the new book by a former FBI agent once employed at the White House. The book includes an allegation of presidential philandering and reckless behaviour among other charges.

Sen. Dole spokesman Nelson Warfield said the White House is "desperate for a distraction from the scandals that are haunting the Clinton administration."

He said the main problem with Mr. McCurry's challenge "is that no one on the Dole payroll is involved with the Aldrich book."

Bitter campaign warfare erupted between the Democratic White House and the Republican challenger over the weekend and sharpened on Monday when Mr. McCurry took aim at Craig Shirley, a conservative publicist representing Gary Aldrich and his book, *Unlimited Access: An FBI Agent Inside the White House*.

Shirley has said he arranged a few radio interviews for the Dole campaign during the Republican primary campaign.

Sen. Dole's spokesman said Mr. Shirley has no formal role in the campaign and suggest the former Kansas senator may not even know him.

Mr. Shirley Monday denied he was a paid adviser to the Sen. Dole campaign, as Mr. McCurry has claimed.

"Mike McCurry is a liar," Mr. Shirley said, noting that documents filed with the Federal Election Commission would prove that he

was not on the Dole campaign payroll.

The book has further frayed nerves at a White House already sweating out revelations that its security staff obtained hundreds of FBI files on Republicans.

The White House may have hoped its quick response would discredit the book, but publisher Al Regnery said White House officials were turning out to be his "best advertisers."

Mr. Regnery said the book had gone into its fourth printing after only four days on the market and was already sold out in Washington, New York and Los Angeles.

He said Regnery press was standing by its author, despite questions about the sourcing of his allegations.

In the book, Mr. Aldrich suggests Mr. Clinton has sneaked out of the White House for a romantic tryst at a nearby hotel without his Secret Service bodyguard detail.

The author also claims former White House aide William Kennedy told him Craig Livingstone had been hired as White House personnel security director because "Hillary wants him."

Mr. Livingstone, who resigned last week, is being investigated for his role in the improper obtaining of hundreds of sensitive FBI background files on Republicans.

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton told reporters travelling with her on a tour of Eastern Europe that the book was "a politically inspired fabrication and I don't think anyone should take it seriously."



American actress Margaux Hemingway, the granddaughter of the late Nobel Prize-winning novelist Ernest Hemingway was found dead inside her Santa Monica home. Margaux Hemingway is seen in this 1989 file photo as she poses for the photographers on the beach in Cannes at the Film Festival (Reuters photo)

Actress Margaux Hemingway found dead apparently of natural causes

SANTA MONICA, California (R) — On the eve of a tragic family anniversary, actress-model Margaux Hemingway, a granddaughter of legendary novelist Ernest Hemingway, was found dead in her home, apparently of natural causes, officials said Tuesday.

The badly decomposed body of the 41-year-old Hemingway was discovered Monday in her modest studio apartment near the beach, said Santa Monica police spokesman Gary Galliot.

The coroner's office determined that Hemingway died from "apparent natural causes," most likely related to her history of epilepsy, but a full autopsy will be needed before any final conclusions can be made, said spokesman Fred Corral.

Authorities said there were no signs of forced entry or foul play. "We have also eliminated suicide as a cause," Mr. Corral said in releasing the coroner's preliminary findings.

Hemingway's friends became worried earlier Monday that they had not heard from her in days, and that led to the discovery of her body. It was "very decomposed" from the heat, and investigators relied on dental records to make an identification, Mr. Galliot said. An autopsy was set for Wednesday.

Hemingway, the older sister of 34-year-old actress Mariel Hemingway, had well-publicised battles against alcoholism and eating disorders. Friends said she had recently become depressed about her prospects for reviving her career.

She was the daughter of Ernest Hemingway's first son Jack, and her death comes almost 35 years to the day her Nobel Prize-winning grandfather was found dead from a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head.

His wife said he accidentally killed himself while cleaning his shotgun in his

Keetchum, Idaho, home on July 2, 1961, but some friends said he had been despondent and likely committed suicide.

Margaux Hemingway's death continues a grim family legacy. Her famous grandfather — author of such classics as *For Whom The Bell Tolls* and *A Farewell To Arms* — battled depression, alcoholism and nervous breakdown. His own father died by suicide.

A neighbour, Peter Osterlund, said he had seen the statuesque actress-model on the street Saturday night and "it looked like she was disturbed."

David Mirisch, Hemingway's agent-manager, said his wife, a close friend of his client, told him she had been crying a lot lately.

Friends had not seen her since Friday. They went to her building and had a labourer climb a ladder onto her second-floor balcony. She was found dead inside.

Hemingway had only recently moved to the apartment a block from the beach.

The 6-foot-tall (1.8-metre-tall) Hemingway became one of the nation's top supermodels in the 1970s promoting a line of fragrances made by Faberge.

She made her Hollywood debut with her younger sister, Mariel, in the 1976 movie *Lipstick*. Though she was nearly seven years younger, Mariel was soon picked out as the better actress and went on to bigger roles in *Manhattan*, *The Mean Season* and *Superman IV*.

Margaux Hemingway's movie credits included *Killer Fish*, *They Call Me Bruce?*, *Over The Brooklyn Bridge*, *Killing Machine*, *Inner Sanctum* and *Deadly Rivals*. She most recently filmed a television show at the Sea World Marine Park in San Diego.

She had a history of alcohol abuse and bulimia, and was treated at the Betty Ford Centre in southern California in the late 1980s. Her two marriages ended in divorce.

Sri Lankan rebels mount attacks amid calls for peace talks

COLOMBO (AFP) — Tamil Tiger guerrillas Tuesday demanded the withdrawal of government forces from their former bastion in northern Sri Lanka shortly after killing 33 troops.

The rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said the military must pull out of the Jaffna peninsula, in the north of the country, ahead of any negotiations to resolve the separatist conflict.

An LTTE statement sent from its London office welcomed a call by a human rights group and a pro-Tiger organisation in Australia to reopen talks to end Sri Lanka's war, which has claimed more than 50,000 lives since 1972.

The two groups said at a conference in Australia last week that Sri Lanka could not remain a unitary state, called for self-government by minority Tamils and demanded a ceasefire and talks under international mediation.

"While we respect the desire of the conference that immediate negotiations must commence, the necessary conducive conditions must be created by the Sri Lankan government by withdrawing its troops from the occupied areas," the LTTE statement said.

Junior Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte said government forces will press ahead with their campaign against the Tigers until the entire minority Tamil community was "liberated" from the clutches of the guerrillas.

Nearly half a million Tamil civilians, just over half the population of Jaffna, have returned home

as life in the region slowly returned to normal with security forces gaining control there for the first time in nearly 10 years.

Gen. Ratwatte told an interviewer last week that there was no prospect of the government resuming negotiations with the LTTE which pulled out of six months of talks with the government to resume their guerrilla war in April last year.

"We will talk to Tigers only when we have tamed them," Gen. Ratwatte said as security forces consolidated their hold on the peninsula of Jaffna, the main symbol of the Tigers' separatist campaign.

The LTTE's new demand for a troop withdrawal from Jaffna came hours after rebels killed 33 soldiers in the north-eastern district of Trincomalee Monday and lost at least 35 of their own cadres.

The LTTE's official organ, the *Viduthalai Puligal* or the Liberation Tiger, in its latest issue said that government forces were unable to control both the northern and eastern regions at the same time.

The Tiger newspaper said Deputy Defence Minister Ratwatte, who was named a general by President Chandrika Kumaratunga this year, and the government were headed for a military disaster.

"The strategy of Gen. Ratwatte is an old story. That is expected that when the north (Jaffna) falls, the east will automatically fall, the north being the axle of the wheel of the struggle."

"The new story is be is

going to lose the east also, when he is unable to swallow the north fully, even after using full strength," the Tigers said.

However, a military spokesman here said Tuesday that the Tigers had stepped up sporadic hit-and-run attacks in a bid to blunt a fresh offensive against the rebels in the jungles of the eastern province.

"They have the ability to hide behind a bush and take a pot shot at troops," the spokesman said. "But they are unable to launch frontal attacks against military positions in the east."

The military lacked sufficient strength to saturate both the north and the east at the same time but the recruitment of up to 20,000 soldiers since late last year should ease the pressure on the army, the spokesman said.

On Tuesday, Tamil Tiger guerrillas carried out a fresh attack against security forces in northeastern Sri Lanka, killing four soldiers for the loss of two of their own men, officials said.

LTTE gunmen attacked the army patrol in Thoppur in the district of Trincomalee early Tuesday, triggering a brief firefight, officials said.

"Four soldiers were killed," a local official in Trincomalee said by telephone.

"The army has recovered the bodies of two Tigers together with their weapons."

Indian MP to sue state for killing of wolf

NEW DELHI (AFP) — An Indian wildlife conservationist plans to sue the government over the killing of a wolf suspected of devouring children, newspapers said Tuesday. Maneka Gandhi, an MP, said she would move the court action over the killing of a young wolf by the police in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh Sunday, the Pioneer and other dailies reported. The slain animal was a member of a pack which has spread terror over three districts by raiding isolated villages and carrying away 20 children, including babies, who have been killed. Mrs. Gandhi, however, alleged the children had been kidnapped by bandits and that the police were blaming wolves as they had failed to track the real killers. "If the killings were carried out by animals, then why did officials and rangers not find pug marks?" she asked at a news conference in Lucknow, the Uttar Pradesh capital. The authorities have launched a massive operation in Pratapgarh, Jaunpur and Sultanpur districts to hunt the killer wolves, deploying hundreds of police and forest officials. Despite the crackdown, the wolves lived a three year old boy from his house in Sajjanpur village before dawn Monday and killed him. Earlier, a 10-year-old boy in the village survived an attack. Mrs. Gandhi is a member of Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda's Janata Dal (People's Party) from Uttar Pradesh.

Cambodian police powerless to prevent exam cheats

PHNOM PENH (R) — Cambodian police have been deployed around Phnom Penh schools for annual exams this week in a bid to halt cheating, but they appeared powerless and unwilling to do so, witnesses said Tuesday. The exams for students aiming to win places in high schools began Monday. Military police have surrounded schools and blocked off roads in a fruitless effort to prevent cheating by pupils and family abettors. Photocopied crib sheets were openly on sale for 200 riel (eight U.S. cents) at a bookstore on the main Norodom Boulevard close to two schools, Chaktomuk and Phnom Daun Penh, where exams were taking place, witnesses said. Police and staff at Phnom Daun Penh school appeared powerless to stop family members climbing into the school over barbed wire fences and handing crib sheets to students inside classrooms, witnesses said. Aid workers and diplomats say the cheating is prompted by the competition for high school entry, seen as a stepping stone towards a better life in poverty-stricken Cambodia. One policeman said: "What can we do? There are many parents, relatives and friends of exam-takers outside the school trying to throw answer sheets through the windows. They shout at us and throw stones at us if we don't let them over the walls."

Peking takes aim at cockroaches, flies

BEIJING (R) — China's capital Beijing urged its residents to arm themselves with pesticides for an all-out attack on cockroaches, mosquitoes and flies, Xinhua News Agency said Tuesday. "All urban neighbourhood and work units are urged to conduct hygienic inspections, and to distribute pesticide," it said. The fight against cockroaches started in mid-June and would last until later this month, it said. The fight against flies and mosquitoes would last from June 28 to July 10, it said.



are released by Kashmiri militants. One of the hostages are seen in the photo. Many Christian Ostron (New)

Kashmir hostages

DELHI (R) — The Indian government has released 10 Kashmiri hostages in a bid to ease tensions in the region. The hostages were held by militants in the area. The government said the hostages were released after a series of negotiations. The hostages were held for several days. The government said the hostages were released after a series of negotiations. The hostages were held for several days. The government said the hostages were released after a series of negotiations.

Hong Kong Democrats of hum

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong Democrats of China Tuesday urged the Chinese government to respect human rights in the territory. They said the Chinese government should not interfere in the internal affairs of Hong Kong. They said the Chinese government should not interfere in the internal affairs of Hong Kong. They said the Chinese government should not interfere in the internal affairs of Hong Kong.

Blast at China fire

SHANGHAI (R) — A huge explosion at a fireworks factory in Shanghai killed at least 36 people and injured more than 100 others. The explosion occurred during a fireworks display. The factory was producing fireworks for the display. The explosion occurred during a fireworks display. The factory was producing fireworks for the display. The explosion occurred during a fireworks display.

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U.S. first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton shakes hands with people in Bucharest's Revolution Square during her visit to Romania. Romania is the first stop of the first lady's ten-day Eastern European goodwill tour (Reuters photo)

Hillary Clinton arrives in Poland on second leg of East Europe tour

KRAKOW, Poland (Agencies) — U.S. first lady Hillary Clinton arrived here Tuesday on the second leg of a seven-nation tour of Central and Eastern Europe.

Mrs. Clinton, who left Romania earlier Tuesday, was welcomed by Jolanta Kwasniewska, wife of Polish President Alexander Kwasniewski.

Her visit is aimed at demonstrating U.S. support for new democracies in the region, formally under Communist rule, her spokesman Neel Lattimore said.

Mrs. Clinton is due to meet residents of this ancient royal capital in southern Poland before paying homage later Tuesday to victims of the Holocaust at the former Nazi death camp at Auschwitz.

She will travel to Warsaw for an evening meeting with Polish Jews.

On Wednesday Mrs. Clinton is due to hold talks with the Polish president, meet members of Poland's feminist organisations and visit a hospital for sick children.

Earlier in Bucharest, Mrs. Clinton spoke out against government interference in women's "most intimate decisions."

"Whether we are talking about forced abortion in China or forced birth in 1989 Romania, the most intimate decisions of women should not be determined by governments," Mrs. Clinton told a working session with 14 non-governmental organisations.

Final results in S. Africa's Zulu region favour ANC's rivals

PIETERMARITZBURG, South Africa (R) — South Africa's Zulu-nationalist Inkatha Freedom Party retained its position as the strongest political force in the volatile Zulu province in elections last week, officials said Tuesday.

Final results for last Wednesday's poll in KwaZulu-Natal, released six days after the election, showed Inkatha won 44.5 per cent of the vote compared to 33 per cent for President Nelson Mandela's African National Congress, or ANC.

Fighting between the ANC and Inkatha in the province has killed 14,000 people in a decade.

The election leaves Inkatha in control of rural areas and the ANC dominant in the towns, including the sprawling city of Durban.

KwaZulu-Natal was the last of the nine

provinces to hold local elections to do away with the final tier of apartheid government.

The vote for Inkatha, whose leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi is Mr. Mandela's greatest political rival, was down from the 50.3 per cent it won in the province in the country's first all-race national elections in 1994.

Inkatha won control of the provincial assembly in 1994 but the ANC, whose 33 per cent of the vote was fractionally up on 1994, has an overwhelming national majority.

Provincial Local Affairs Minister Peter Miller told a news conference that voter turnout was 44 per cent.

He said the white-led National Party won 13 per cent of the vote, compared to 11 per cent in 1994.

12 Arizona militia members arrested in bomb plot

PHOENIX (R) — After a six-month police probe, 12 rightwing militia members trained to build bombs were arrested Monday and charged with conspiring to spark civil disorder by blowing up government offices in the Phoenix area, U.S. officials said.

More arrests were expected. Attorney General Janet Reno added.

Police seized 400 pounds (180 kg) of ammonium nitrate and other bomb-making components in one of three homes that were raided by police, and authorities said the so-called "Viper Militia" had a training video explaining how to "collapse" buildings.

The federal prosecutor for Arizona said there was no indication the plot was connected with last year's deadly bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma City or the sabotage of a railroad track in Arizona last October.

Janet Napolitano, U.S. Attorney for Arizona, told a news conference the group was suspected of plotting to bomb the Phoenix Police Headquarters, and buildings in the city housing the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Immigration and Naturalisation Service.

Also targeted were the Arizona National Guard, the Secret Service and the Federal ATF, she said.

She said the 10 men and two women arrested Monday had apparently trained to build ammonium nitrate bombs and rockets.

"The defendants' conduct posed an extreme danger to public safety," said Thomas Germy, acting special agent in charge of the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, one of the federal agencies allegedly targeted.

Candidates enter home stretch in Russian poll

MOSCOW (R) — Russia's two candidates entered the home stretch in their race for the presidency Tuesday, but one kept a low profile at home and the second dropped plans for a news conference for fear of violating election law.

Aides said President Boris Yeltsin, out of the public eye for almost a week and stiff and wooden in a television broadcast Monday, was working on documents at his country home.

Communist challenger Gennady Zyuganov, just three points behind Mr. Yeltsin in the first round of the election, did not show up at a scheduled news conference.

Deputy Communist Party head Valentin Kuptsov said Mr. Zyuganov did not want a news conference appearance to be used "to make insinuations against him".

Russian law bans campaigning on the final day before the vote, which starts at 1900 GMT Tuesday in the remote northeastern region of Chukotka.

The last polling stations close 24 hours later in the Western enclave of Kaliningrad, between Poland and Lithuania.

Concern about Mr. Yeltsin's health had dominated the final days of the campaign after the president skipped trips outside the capital and then failed to show up at meetings in Moscow.

Aides said he had lost his voice after a gruelling first-round campaign.

But Mr. Zyuganov demanded an official report on the state of the president's health and the stilted television appearance could do little to reassure voters that the president was well.

"We haven't seen him for several days and today they showed us a painted mummy as if they'd just got it from the mausoleum," Mr. Zyuganov's spokesman Stanislav Govorukhin told a news conference. "Today they are suggesting we vote for a living corpse."

In his final televised appearance, Mr. Zyuganov said Mr. Yeltsin had built his campaign on lies and fear and would destroy Russia.

"You will choose either a strong powerful Russia or a colonial administration," he added, appealing to the



Russian President Boris Yeltsin listens to Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin during their meeting in the presidential residence. Mr. Chernomyrdin said Monday that Mr. Yeltsin was suffering from a cold but assured Russians nothing extraordinary would happen (Reuter photo)

strong streak of nationalism in the Russian electorate.

But Mr. Zyuganov has had little play on state-controlled television, which has also largely ignored Mr. Yeltsin's illness.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said Monday Mr. Yeltsin was getting over a cold and he dismissed the idea that something more serious was up. "The president grabbed my right hand in a handshake and nearly tore it off. Don't worry, everything is all right," he said.

Mr. Yeltsin, 65, had two mild heart attacks in 1995, but he staged a remarkable recovery this year, with non-stop tours of Russia's regions and dances for the television cameras during an energetic first-round campaign.

But by the second round the president had all but disappeared. He leads little-trusted opinion polls by 10 points and more, but even the pollsters say the figures could be wrong.

Mr. Yeltsin's aides admit the result could depend to a large extent on how many people vote, especially in the big pro-Yeltsin cities of Moscow, St. Petersburg and Yekaterinburg.

Mr. Yeltsin's painful economic reforms are already bearing fruit in the three industrial areas, which hold 15 per cent of Russia's more than 100 million voters. A

high pro-Yeltsin turnout there could swing the election.

Weather forecasters predicted cool, showery weather in the two biggest cities — a boon for the president because voters are less likely to race to their country cottages and vegetable gardens and more likely to vote.

Analysts say a good turnout should help the president, while a low turnout would be good for Mr. Zyuganov, because he has a hard core of disciplined voters who will turn out regardless.

Pro-Yeltsin Russian newspapers also concentrated on getting voters into the polling stations with aggressive appeals which appeared to ignore the campaigning ban.

"If you do not come to the polls on July 3, the results could be determined by the will of the minority," said Rossiyskiye Vesti.

The popular Moskovsky Komsomolsky, once the paper of the Communist youth movement but now a firm Yeltsin backer, screamed: "Even the Mongolians rejected communism" in a front-page headline. "Are we more stupid?"

But the two main Communist newspapers, Pravda and Sovetskaya Rossiya, did not appear, apparently by choice. A brief announcement on an inside

page of Monday's Pravda said the paper would next appear Friday.

Polls are already open in the rebel Republic of Chechnya and Russians have voted in some former Soviet republics, where Wednesday, a holiday in Russia, is a normal working day.

Meanwhile a top NATO military officer said Tuesday he thought Russia's basic security policy would remain the same regardless of who emerged as president this week, but added the alliance's future ties with Moscow remained up in the air.

"I think nothing will change in the Russian government's conduct regarding the basic principles of security policy," General Klaus Naumann, chairman of NATO's military committee, told German radio a day before Russia's run-off election.

"We will have to see how the new Russian government responds to NATO's desires for contact and NATO's readiness for cooperation in partnership," the German general added.

"I hope that we can come to a reasonable conclusion that is free from confrontation and that we can adopt the language of reason and stop the superfluous rhetoric when it comes to NATO's eastern expansion," he said.

A picture released by Kashmiri militants on July 15, 1995 in Srinagar shows five Western hostages somewhere in India's Jammu and Kashmir state. One year after the hostages were kidnapped, foreign diplomats still keep vigil but do not know if the hostages are dead or alive. Hostages seated (left-right) Keith Mangan (U.K.), Drik Hasert (Germany), Hans Christian Ostroe (Norway), Paul Wells (U.K.) and Donald Hutchings (USA) (Reuter photo)

Kashmir hostage ordeal perplexes diplomats

NEW DELHI (R) — One year after four Western tourists were kidnapped in Kashmir, foreign diplomats still keep vigil but do not know if the hostages are dead or alive.

"It's a real mystery. It's very frustrating that we can't come to the end of it," a diplomat said.

"It could be either way. The evidence is contradictory. They may still be alive. They may also be dead."

Foreign missions have had a near permanent presence in Kashmir since American Donald Hutchings and British Keith Mangan and Paul Wells were abducted by Al Faran militants last July 4.

The fourth hostage, German Dirk Hasert, was captured four days later along with Norwegian Hans Christian Ostroe, who was beheaded in August.

The ordeal has brought agents from the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and London's

Scotland Yard to Indian soil.

German intelligence experts leading tracker dogs have scoured a Kashmir forest.

"No one suspected this would last a year," another diplomat said.

Despite frustrations, the intense effort appears to have borne some fruit.

Diplomats say prolonged personal contact has allowed them to strengthen ties with key players in Kashmir, including separatists, government authorities and security officials.

Dozens of separatist groups are fighting Indian rule in Jammu and Kashmir state. Police and hospital officials say more than 20,000 people have died in insurgency-related violence since the revolt broke out in 1990.

The involvement of five nations in efforts to win the hostages' release has produced inevitable complications, but diplomats said there was agreement on two fundamental points.

First, a raid to free the

hostages was ruled out.

"No one thought we had information which was sufficiently precise to enable such an operation to be planned and executed in such a way as to entail no risks to the hostages," an official said.

Nor have they considered bowing to Al Faran's demand that jailed separatists be freed in exchange for the hostages.

"No one would think about encouraging the Indian government to let these guys out," one diplomat said.

Foreign missions uniformly lauded the efforts of Indian officials, who did the direct talking to Al Faran before negotiations snapped in November.

"It's been a partnership," one envoy said. "The Indian government has responded to virtually every suggestion the foreigners have made. We are in tune in pursuing this thing."

Authorities lost touch with Al Faran seven months

ago. Last month experts including FBI and Scotland Yard agents searched a forest after a captured militant said he had heard the captives had been killed. They found no evidence to support his version.

Authorities believe a turning-point may have come last December when an alleged Al Faran leader, Abdul Hamid Turki, was killed in a clash with security forces.

"It's bad luck Turki got killed," one official said. "It changed the whole complexion. He was a key figure."

Efforts took another blow in February when a militant known as Sikender and considered close to Al Faran was killed.

Now authorities are perplexed. "We can't see them (Al Faran). We are not sure they are there," one official said.

But diplomats say efforts will continue.

Hong Kong Democrats accuse China of human rights breach

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong's Democratic Party accused China Tuesday of violating human rights by barring pro-democracy politicians from the country and confiscating their travel documents at Beijing airport the previous day.

"Under the international covenant on civil and political rights, no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of the right to enter his own country," party leader Martin Lee said.

"Since China considers Hong Kong people as Chinese citizens, then they should be allowed in," Mr. Lee, whose party is the biggest and most popular in Hong Kong, told a news conference.

Mr. Lee scoffed at Chinese officials who have said the eight Hong Kong politicians posed a threat to China's national security.

"I think it's the greatest joke that I have heard," he said.

"What did these people arm themselves with? Bits of paper with 60,000 signatures of Hong Kong people and some letters."

The eight politicians flew to Beijing Monday to hand over a petition opposing Beijing's plan to replace Hong Kong's elected legislature with an appointed provisional body when Britain hands the territory back to China in the middle of next year.

Mr. Lee said Monday's action by China was badly timed as Hong Kong and Beijing were trying to persuade foreign countries to grant visa-free entry for Hong Kong passport holders.

He also urged China to relax its stand towards Hong Kong reporters covering events in China. Several reporters on the flight with the activists were detained for several hours and their notes were seized and destroyed.

"We think this is totally wrong," Mr. Lee said.

Hong Kong Chinese politicians barred from China led a noisy demonstration to Beijing's representative office in the British colony Tuesday to denounce what they called brutal treatment.

"We strongly condemn the Chinese government for refusing to let us in, confiscating our travel documents and compiling a blacklist," group spokesman Andrew Cheng told reporters.

"We demand the Chinese government return our travel documents immediately and apologise for their brutal action and publish the blacklist," Mr. Cheng added.

Zhang Junsheng, a deputy director of the Xinhua News Agency which serves as China's unofficial mission to the British colony, told reporters Friday there was no blacklist of Hong Kong people.

Mongolia Democrats to take power

ULAN BATOR (R) — Mongolia's opposition Democratic Union Coalition won 50 of the 76 seats in parliament in final results Tuesday, routing the former Communists who had held power for 75 years.

The ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) had yet to make an official comment on its crushing defeat, but U.S. election observers said government leaders would cooperate to ensure a smooth transfer of power.

"We welcome the important statement of Prime Minister Jasrai to us that he intends to provide the fullest possible cooperation to the incoming government," the U.S. observer group said in a statement.

The opposition stunned the MPRP — and themselves — by capturing 50 seats in Sunday's parliamentary elections, more than eight times the six seats they won in 1992, according to final results released by the general election committee.

"It's a revolution," victorious candidate and coalition leader Hashbat Hulan said in an interview. "All our polls suggested this, but we did not expect this."

The formerly Communist MPRP saw its commanding 70-seat majority in the Great Hural, or parliament, slashed to just 25, an election committee official said. A small independent party won one seat.

Within the coalition, the National Democratic Party captured 34 seats, the Social Democratic Party took 13 and independent candidates running under the coalition banner won three.

Blast at China firecracker plant kills 36

BEIJING (R) — A huge explosion at a firecracker factory in southwestern China killed at least 36 workers and passers-by, hurling bodies and limbs into the air, local officials and state media said Tuesday.

The blast Saturday injured 52 people, including three who were in critical condition with serious burns, an official said by telephone.

The explosion, which destroyed the Yongxing Firecracker Factory and rocked Piya village in Sichuan province, came after authorities ordered the plant to close for safety reasons, the official in the nearby town of Hefang said.

At least 36 people were killed but the final toll was unclear because some

workers at the privately-run factory were from elsewhere in China with no relatives nearby to report them missing, a police officer told Reuters.

"We cannot yet be sure of the exact number of dead because many of the people at the factory were from other areas," he said.

"Many of the bodies were completely blown apart, there was no way to identify them," he said.

Only shreds of clothing remained to give a clue as to the identity of some victims, the police officer said.

Many of the dead and injured were factory workers but others were villagers who were passing the plant when gunpowder stored in the plant detonated just before 9.00 a.m. (0100 GMT) Saturday, he said but

gave no details.

The explosion levelled 10 factory buildings and shook the ground for 10 kilometres around, the Wenhui Bao newspaper said.

It quoted an eyewitness as saying he saw four female workers thrown more than 100 metres into a bed of rice seedlings by the force of the explosion while bricks and stones from the shattered factory fell like rain. Three of the women were killed and the fourth lost a leg.

Fireworks, considered by many Chinese an essential part of traditional celebrations, are blamed for killing or injuring 60,000 people a year, with many of the casualties caused by accidents during production or transport.

Over 4,400 Burundian Hutus flee violence

BUJUMBURA (R) — More than 4,400 Burundian Hutus have fled to Rwanda and Zaire from violence in Burundi's troubled north-western region of Cibitoke, U.N. officials said Tuesday.

The refugees including 150 unaccompanied children crossed into Rwanda's southwestern border region of Cyangugu from Thursday to Sunday and to Uvira, Zaire, from Saturday to Monday, they said.

Some 2,510 went to Cyangugu and almost 1,900 to Uvira.

"There is fighting in Cibitoke and reports from the refugees speak of some deaths in Cibitoke before they left. But it is unclear whether this is rebels or the army," one official said.

In Rwanda's capital Kigali, a spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees said the 2,510 in Cyangugu were camped around a communal office in the town of Bugarama amid fears for their health.

"The big concern is measles. One child has already died from measles," said Chris Stromberg, adding the aid agency Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF-Doctors Without Borders) was vaccinating against measles.

"The place where they are is only a temporary solution."

Officials quoted the refugees as saying they left Burundi after the deaths of family members and destruction of houses.

"They said they were ordered last week to leave their communes and seek refuge at the communal office at Muginga. According to the refugees, this office was attacked and several people were killed, prompting them to flee to Rwanda," one said.

The Burundian Defence Ministry said government troops killed 31 Hutu insurgents in a gumbatle in Cibitoke Thursday after rebels ambushed an escorted convoy and killed two soldiers and a civilian.

Lack of security has made Cibitoke a no-go area for Western aid workers. The International Committee of the Red Cross, the last aid agency working in Cibitoke, pulled out of Burundi early in June after three of its Swiss staff were killed in an ambush.

More than 150,000 people have been killed in Burundi since the assassination of its first Hutu president by troops in 1993.

Meanwhile experts on a technical panel said Tuesday a regional military force to stabilise Burundi is likely to be composed mainly of soldiers from Tanzania, Uganda and Ethiopia.

Ministers from five African countries, meeting in this northern Tanzanian town on how to provide military aid to the strife-torn central African nation, formed a committee of experts Monday to set up a peacekeeping force.

Lebed wants full powers as Russia's super cop

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin's top security advisor Alexander Lebed said Tuesday he needed full powers in the fight against Russia's "immense security problems" and announced tighter visa rules.

"To resolve the problems of security I need full powers," he told reporters on the eve of the presidential election runoff between Mr. Yeltsin and Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov.

Gen. Lebed, a retired general who has become Mr. Yeltsin's most visible and vocal advisor in the last two weeks, said: "I need extra powers to properly carry out the task."

"It is not to do with Gen. Lebed, but the security of the country," he said, adding "I am not preparing to take over power."

Tighter visa and passport rules for foreigners will also be introduced, Gen. Lebed was quoted as saying by ITAR-TASS news agency.

The new rules would not mean a new "iron curtain," but Russia "has to defend itself — too much is being taken out of the country which should not be taken out, and things are being brought in which are not needed at all," he said.

Countries will be classified "according to their degree of friendliness toward Russia," he said, adding that "if we organise this mechanism in a civilised way we will not hurt anybody."

Mr. Yeltsin is expected to win the run-off, but last-minute doubts have been cast over the election due to the 65-year-old incumbent's weak health.

Gen. Lebed came third in the first round of the election on June 16, winning 14.5 per cent. He gave Mr. Yeltsin his backing in exchange for becoming secretary of the Security Council, which brings together the defence, interior, secret services and other key ministries.

Gen. Lebed's rise from retired general to one of the most influential men in Russia has been meteoric.

On Sunday, he suggested that the post of vice president be created for him, something that received a cool response from the rest of the government.

Gen. Lebed's speeches have concentrated on what he says is a wave of corruption and crime sweeping Russia.

On Monday, he said on ORT television that in the crime war "we'll shoot people, but reasonably, with minimal losses for the law enforcement bodies, and only those people who refuse to be persuaded."

Gen. Lebed has also attacked the presence of non-Russian religious groups, including the Mormons, saying they should be thrown out of Russia. His statements on religion drew the criticism of U.S. President Bill Clinton.

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Features

Greece saves last of E. Europe's vultures

By Dina Kyriakidou
Reuters

DADIA, Greece — They are big, ugly things that feed on corpses but, for the environmentalists struggling to save them, vultures are precious.

In the forest of Dadia, near the Evros River that separates Greece from Turkey, they have created a rare home for vultures and other endangered birds of prey, whose numbers have dwindled precariously this century.

The pride of this bird sanctuary is the black vulture, whose wings have an impressive three-metre span. As few as 20 such birds survived here in the 1980s, but the Dadia forest reserve now boasts up to 100.

"Their young are so funny. When they feel danger approaching the nest, they play 'dead'," said Rania Spyropoulou, an official from the environment ministry, in admiration of the bald-headed, black-faced creatures.

The reserve, forged through cooperation between World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Greece's environment ministry and local authorities, ensures the birds get the space, quiet and food they need.

"We started this pro-

gramme in 1980 because the last black vultures in Eastern Europe had survived here," said WWF forestry scientist Costas Poirazidis.

The last two couples nesting on Mount Olympus, home of the ancient Greek gods, disappeared in 1991, he said. These birds nest once a year and usually only have one offspring.

"Their numbers diminished fast from poisoned baits intended for wolves and foxes," Mr. Poirazidis said. "But now they are more threatened by the reduction in feeding and nesting grounds."

What makes the Dadia reserve special is the diversity of environment and species here, he said. Of 38 kinds of birds of prey known in Europe, 36 can be found here including four types of European vultures.

The small pine and oak woods that dot the landscape of soft rolling hills make perfect homes for the vultures. The eagles love to nest in the rocky outcrops that break up the clearings necessary to hunt for food.

Altogether, more than 200 species of birds have been recorded in Dadia and 40 kinds of reptiles and amphibians, the perfect food for eagles and hawks.

"The majority of birds are endangered and, therefore, protected," Mr. Poirazidis

said.

All vultures — the black, griffon, Egyptian and bearded — are very rare. The reserve's single bearded vulture has lived alone for more than 20 years and WWF plans to introduce another couple to Dadia this year.

"There was strong reaction from the locals at first when the land was declared off limits," said Costas Pistolas, a local resident now a guard at the reserve.

Villagers, mostly woodcutters and shepherds, feared the reserve would give a final blow to the area's impoverished economy that has forced many to leave for nearby towns to find work.

Instead, young men and women from the village were hired as guards and tourist guides, or staff for a hotel and restaurant built for bird watching buffs.

"Now there is not a single person in this village who is against this project," Mr. Pistolas said. "It created about 20 new jobs and the women have created a cooperative to make and sell food and crafts."

Eco-tourism has brought new life to the village. Last year 15,000 people from all over the world came to watch the vultures gather at their feeding site or to trek forest trails surrounding the reserve.

Hungary's holocaust Jews too old for aid

By Michael Roddy
Reuters

BUDAPEST — Hungary is in the final stages of devising a plan to compensate Hungarian Jews who survived the holocaust, but for 86-year-old Gyorgy Kormendi it comes a half century too late.

"Today I am here but tomorrow I may be a dead person," said Mr. Kormendi, who survived four years in Nazi forced labour camps. He was eating a bowl of stew at a soup kitchen run by the U.S.-backed Hungarian Jewish Social Support Foundation, which has been helping needy Hungarian Jews for decades.

"But what can you expect from a government which is on the edge of bankruptcy? It is depressing that I eat this food here but I cannot have higher demands," added Mr. Kormendi, who said he has never received any special compensation from the government for the years he spent in forced labour.

This week representatives of the U.S.-based World Jewish Congress (WJC), Hungarian Jewish groups and the Hungarian government are due to meet in Budapest to put the finishing touches to an agreement for restitution of Jewish

properties confiscated during World War II.

The deal, to create a fund that would benefit people like Mr. Kormendi, would have to be approved by parliament, possibly in September — more than half a century after World War II ended.

Following the war the Hungarian government, which was allied to the losing axis powers, was supposed to make restitution of properties taken from Hungary's 800,000 Jews, some 600,000 of whom died in death and labour camps.

After Poland, most of whose Jews were annihilated, Hungary had the highest, and probably wealthiest, Jewish population in central Europe. Today Hungary still has 80,000 to 100,000 Jews, and boasts central Europe's highest synagogue.

But the Communist government which took power in Hungary in 1948, while it grudgingly tolerated religion, mostly reneged on restitution and instead nationalised many religious properties — Jewish and non-Jewish alike.

It has now fallen to Hungary's post-Communist government — led by a former communist, prime minister Gyula Horn — to make good on the promises of 50 years ago, and to do so in a

way that does not create rifts among Jews or alienate non-Jews who might resent what they see as favouritism.

"I have aged at least 10 years in the last two," said Judit Csiba, the political state secretary in the ministry of justice who has been working on the problem.

"To give an example — if somebody wants to get back his apartment it is possible to be confronted by someone living there who also was deported and suffered the same fate."

"In human and legal terms it cannot be done. One would just open new wounds."

Ms. Csiba said that by some estimates, the properties owned by Jews before the war would be worth the equivalent of Hungary's entire annual gross domestic product of about \$45 billion.

The list of formerly Jewish-owned properties includes factories, apartment blocks, houses and art treasures. Some communal Jewish properties, such as synagogues and schools, have been returned to the Hungarian Jewish community.

But saddled with an overall foreign debt of some \$30 billion, the Hungarian government says it cannot

afford to give back everything, and so a compromise has been devised.

Ms. Csiba said the agreement calls for establishing a foundation to which the government would turn over some real estate, works of art and several billion forints worth of compensation coupons — which are vouchers given in lieu of properties confiscated under the Nazis and Communists.

The foundation in turn would provide stipends to Hungary's 10,000 to 15,000 holocaust survivors and manage the reserves to help the Jewish community in general.

"I am awaiting the meeting (of Jewish groups) with great excitement," said Ms. Csiba. "There is always insecurity because they could raise a question which would mean we have to start again. I have been in that situation in the past few years."

But Gyorgy Timar, Jewish deputy president of the opposition Smallholders Party, said the government is evading its responsibilities by failing to provide full compensation.

"We have to admit the government is impoverished but buildings can be given now for the help of the poor and not just for Jews in Hungary, but for

any who want to come back," Mr. Timar said.

"It is a matter of justice and if (full compensation) cannot be fulfilled now, maybe it can be in another 50 years."

For Ms. Csiba the biggest remaining hurdle is the composition of an 18-to-20 member foundation board with representatives from the government, Hungarian Jews and Jews from abroad.

Gustav Zoltai, acting director of the Hungarian Jewish community group Mazsibisz, and Leslie Keller, local WJC representative, declined to comment before this week's meetings.

Diplomats familiar with the negotiations said wrangling among the Jews had played into the government's hands.

"It has allowed the government to not give up as much as if the groups were united, and not look at the same time like they were trying to divide and conquer," one diplomat said.

For the ageing holocaust survivors, the debate over the plan seems increasingly meaningless.

"It (the money we will get) wouldn't be much of a help anyway," said Ilona Rozsnyai, who survived Dachau. "They would never be able to give as much as is needed."

Rifkind briefs Saudis

(Continued from page 1)

radio he did not condone last week's bombing.

But he said the bombers had an "intellectually very strong case" and probably believed that the U.S. had invaded Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Rifkind said of Mr. Masari: "I have little time for him or his beliefs. He is an unwelcome visitor in the U.K. He appeared to be condoning these incidents in

Khobar."

British sources said security is being reviewed for British Royal Air Force personnel at Khobar, and at another major Saudi-allied base at Khamis Mushait, as well as for military advisors and liaison teams.

Mr. Rifkind arrives in Aqaba today for a one-day visit and talks with King Hussein and Jordanian leaders.

Abu Marzouk denounces bombing

(Continued from page 1)

"Hamas has no relationship with the marginal Islamic groups which would allow it to give useful information to Saudi officials," he said.

Mr. Abu Marzouk drew a distinction between Hamas operations and attacks carried out by Islamic groups in Arab states. The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas "is a national liberation movement and we are resisting a coercive occupation, but the actions (of fundamentalist groups) in Algeria and Egypt are just politically desperate acts of violence."

Attacks like those serve only to "weaken the Arab

governments while we need their support. They also weaken Islamic action and it is Israel which benefits," Mr. Abu Marzouk added.

The Hamas leader is currently appealing a U.S. court decision to extradite him to Israel, where he is wanted in connection with a series of bomb attacks.

Asked whether his possible extradition could spark a new round of Islamic violence in the U.S., Mr. Abu Marzouk said it was "unlikely" that Hamas' position would change, as it refuses to take part in any operations outside the occupied territories, on condition that Israel does not take part in operations against Hamas outside these territories.

Netanyahu: No land-for-peace

(Continued from page 1)

violations on the Palestinian side. They are not doing enough" against terrorism, he said.

"They have not surrendered or extradited killers and Hamas leaders. We know what they are doing and they know that we know."

He said Israel had not yet decided whether to go ahead with the long-delayed army pullback from Hebron, the only West Bank town still under Israeli occupation.

"We are still studying this," he said. The army was to withdraw from four-fifths of the town on March 28 but the redeployment was postponed after a string of Islamic suicide bombings in Israel in February and March.

On the closure of the Palestinian territories, imposed in February after the first suicide bombing, Mr. Netanyahu said: "The closure was forced upon Israel. We will decide regarding easing it or not accordingly."

Rafsanjani pledges 'friendly' ties

(Continued on page 7)

described his talks with Bahraini officials as "positive". IRNA said.

Mr. Sharaa "said that the regional tensions and misunderstandings are due to the provocations of outsiders and will benefit the enemies of the Muslim countries", it added.

Mr. Velayati told Mr. Sharaa that boosting cooperation with neighbouring countries was among the principles of Iran's foreign policy, IRNA said.

Iran on Monday welcomed the mediation effort of Syria, its main Arab ally.

International community failing to take responsibility for massive human rights violations in 1996

AI's Annual Report details human rights abuses in 146 countries

Governments — worldwide — are signally failing to prevent massive human rights violations committed by other governments, often preferring to ignore suffering in the search for profit, Amnesty International said as it released its 1996 Annual Report.

The report — covering human rights abuses in 146 countries during 1995 — details atrocities committed by governments and armed opposition groups, such as deliberate and indiscriminate killings, torture and ill-treatment and "disappearances."

"The international community all too often tries to wash its hands of these atrocities by claiming that they are 'local affairs' over which they have no influence," said Pierre Sané, secretary general of Amnesty International. "But who is arming and training those committing the atrocities?"

"The truth is that these same governments who deny responsibility are busy promoting and organising the export of military and security equipment to people who have shown time and time again that they use these weapons and devices to kill and torture their victims."

The bloodshed in countries such as Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Burundi was the most visible illustration of human rights abuses committed during armed conflicts in 1995, but violations also took place in prison cells and police stations from Colombia to China.

"Responsibility for human rights abuses does not lie only with those who pull the trigger or apply the electric shock," Mr. Sané said. "It also lies with those who supply the weapons and the training needed to use them."

In its report, Amnesty International singles out governments including China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America and some of their allies as "trading in terror" but calls on all governments to prohibit the sale of military, security and police equipment to any state where there is evidence that it could be used

to commit human rights violations.

In its Annual Report, Amnesty International details human rights violations in 146 countries. Government agents carried out extrajudicial executions or possible extrajudicial executions in 63 of these countries, and people were known to have "disappeared" in recent years, including 1995, in 49 countries. At least 85 governments jailed prisoners of conscience during the year. Government agents tortured or ill-treated detainees in 114 countries and in 54 countries detainees died as a result. Executions took place in 41 and prisoners were sentenced to death in 58.

Armed opposition groups were responsible for human rights abuses, including deliberate and arbitrary killings, torture and hostage-taking in 41 countries in 1995.

Africa

In 1995, the number of refugees and internally displaced people in Africa reached more than eight-and-a-half million people.

The unresolved tensions underlying the genocide in Rwanda of 1994 and the continuing massacres committed by both government forces and armed opposition groups in Burundi and Rwanda exacerbated the ethnic tensions in Central Africa, while nearly two million Rwandese refugees, mostly Hutu, remained in exile in Burundi, Tanzania and Zaire. Amnesty International expressed concern that some of these refugees were forcibly returned.

Nigeria's military government faced unprecedented international criticism of its human rights record in 1995. Despite this, Ken Saro Wiwa and eight other members of the Ogoni ethnic group were convicted of murder and executed in November, following judicial proceedings which were manifestly unfair.

In positive steps taken to address the issue of impunity for human rights violators, South Africa appointed a commission to investigate "gross human rights

abuses" committed between 1960 and 1993. In Ethiopia, members of the former government charged with committing genocide and crimes against humanity were brought to trial.

Americas

Different patterns of impunity for perpetrators of human rights violations were present throughout Latin America and the climate of impunity in which the security forces operated in Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Haiti, Mexico and Peru meant that many sectors of the population were at risk.

While the language of human rights has been almost universally adopted by governments, human rights violations were still taking place daily throughout the region. In Colombia, at least 1,000 people were extrajudicially executed and more than 150 people "disappeared" after detention by the armed forces, the police or paramilitary groups, yet the armed forces continued to escape punishment for these violations.

Torture and ill-treatment were widespread in almost all countries of the region. In Brazil, there was widespread evidence that torture remained a common method of extracting information from criminal suspects. In Mexico, extensive use of torture and ill-treatment by law enforcement agents continued to be reported, with dozens of people tortured during and immediately after the operations in Chiapas state. In Peru, complaints of torture by detainees suspected of "terrorism" continued to be received. In a single arrest in August in the Village of Chahuayacu, 41 people were said to have been forced to sign a document in which they admitted to being "subversive."

Amnesty International remained concerned about the increasing use of the death penalty in the United States of America, where 56 prisoners were executed in 1995, the highest number recorded since executions resumed in 1977.

In Peru, where human rights abuses continued to

be carried out by armed opposition groups, dozens of civilians were deliberately and arbitrarily killed by the Partido Comunista del Perú (PCP), (Communist Party of Peru), Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path).

Asia/Pacific

Torture and ill-treatment, often leading to deaths in custody, continued to be a major concern throughout the region, with thousands of victims including women, children and human rights defenders reported. In China, torture of political and criminal detainees remained widespread, often to force confessions or to intimidate and punish prisoners, with many victims tortured with electro-shock weapons. Many people were imprisoned after blatantly unfair trials, including the prominent dissident Wei Jingsheng, who was given a 14-year sentence despite international condemnation.

Twenty-one aboriginal people died in custody or during police operations in Australia — the highest number since records started being kept in 1980 — and police reportedly continued to harass relatives who were unwilling to accept official explanations and called for further investigations.

Armed opposition groups were responsible for widespread human rights abuses in the region. In Sri Lanka, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were responsible for attacks on both Sinhalese and Tamil civilians. In one attack in May, 42 villagers, including at least 12 women and six children, were deliberately shot dead by LTTE forces. Armed opposition groups and government forces in India and Pakistan committed human rights abuses including deliberate and arbitrary killings, torture and ill-treatment.

Europe

Armed conflicts continued to be the major source of human rights violations on a massive scale in Europe. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bosnian Serb

forces — forcibly abducted thousands of people, many of whom were believed to have been deliberately and arbitrarily killed.

Many non-Serb civilians were killed, raped and threatened during forcible expulsions from Bosnian Serb controlled territory. All sides in the conflict held hundreds of prisoners of conscience, most of whom were detained solely on account of their national group. Many detainees were reportedly tortured, ill-treated or made to perform forced labour in dangerous conditions.

Russian forces were responsible for widespread human rights violations during the conflict in the self-proclaimed Chechen Republic. These violations included possible indiscriminate killings of civilians, extrajudicial executions, torture and ill-treatment and detention without trial. There were also numerous allegations of torture and ill-treatment in detention. In Turkey, the conflict between government forces and armed members of the secessionist Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan (PKK), Kurdish Labour Party, claimed 4,000 lives, including those of civilians, during the year. Reports of torture by police and gendarmes were commonplace, and Amnesty International received an increased number of reports of children subjected to torture.

Armed opposition groups committed gross human rights abuses in the context of armed conflict in the region. In June, forces loyal to Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudaev were reported to have killed at least 40 civilians and taken hundreds hostage in the town of Budennovsk. PKK members were responsible for at least 60 deliberate and arbitrary killings in Turkey.

Villagers armed and paid by the Turkish government to fight the PKK and captured by the PKK during the course of attacks were frequently killed, in some cases together with their extended families.

Middle East/North Africa

Armed internal conflicts and social and political unrest led to appalling human rights violations in the Middle East and North Africa. In Algeria, hundreds of people were known to have been extrajudicially executed by the security forces and government-backed militias. Many were reportedly killed in their homes in front of their families, when they posed no lethal threat. Hundreds of civilians were killed after being abducted, or deliberately and arbitrarily killed in targeted attacks and bomb explosions reported to have been carried out by armed opposition groups defining themselves as "Islamic groups." More than 20 journalists were killed, most of them reportedly by armed groups.

In Saudi Arabia, the judicial punishments of amputation and flogging continued to be imposed for a wide range of offences. The majority of the victims of such cruel methods were foreign nationals. At least 11 people were sentenced to between 200 and 1,500 lashes each; Mohammed Ali Al Sayyid, an Egyptian national, was sentenced to 4,000 lashes for burglary. In response to the outbreak of widespread protests calling for the restoration of democratic rights, the authorities in Bahrain arrested thousands of people, including women and children. Reports of torture of detainees were widespread.

In Israel and the occupied territories, Palestinian detainees continued to be systematically tortured or ill-treated during interrogation by the General Security Service (GSS). The ministerial committee which oversees the GSS allowed the shaking of detainees to continue and renewed, throughout the year, the extended use of secret guidelines effectively allowing torture. In areas under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian National Authority, four people died in custody in circumstances suggesting that torture may have contributed to their deaths.

He criticised the economic adjustment programme for concentrating on the rectification of imbalances in the trade balance, balance of payments and the budget. He said that although the emphasis was on eliminating the structural imbalances in the production activity and on developing this process to boost exports, both the programme and the government did not give, since the late 80s, any attention to the requirements of active investments, upgrading production and creating employment opportunities for the Jordanian workforce. As such, he added, instead of solving the economic problems, the programme remedied some and created at the same time new ones that deepened under the influence of other factors.

Among the top 20 companies, 12 are from the United States, six are from Japan, one is from Switzerland and one is from the Netherlands-Britain. After NTT, the leading Japanese firms are Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi, Toyota Motor, Fuji Bank, Sumitomo Bank and the Industrial Bank of Japan.

GRAND TOTAL

+ New 12 months low
+ Stock dividend during the past 12 months
+ Listed during the past 12 months
+ P/E ratio is 100 or more
+ Negative P/E
+ Earnings is same or N/A for the most recent year

Energy			* JOD Cross Rates		
Commodity	Last	Delivery	Currency	Buy	Sell
Coffee (c/lbs)	122.5	Spot	US Dollar	0.702	0.710
Cocoa (c/lbs)	2,486	Spot	GB Sterling	1.100	1.103
Sugar (c/lbs/lb)	199.3	Spot	DE Mark	0.4639	0.4662
Wheat (c/lbs)	227	Spot	CH Franc	0.5685	0.5683
Soya (c/lbs)	22.61	Spot	FR Franc	8.1377	8.1379
Tea (c/lb)	11	Spot	JP Yen	0.0043	0.0045
Barley (c/lbs)	3.88	Spot	NL Guilder	0.4142	0.4163
Rice (c/lbs)	625	Spot	TL Lira	0.00002	0.00004



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Bomb scare puts Atlanta security to test

ATLANTA (R) — Olympic Games security went on red alert on Monday after two suspicious packages were found near the Atlanta athletes' village during a ceremony in the complex attended by senior state, city and Olympic officials.

The scare turned out to be a false alarm, but anti-nuclear protesters said it highlighted the potential risk of attack on an ageing nuclear reactor in the middle of the village which becomes home to athletes from 197 teams this month.

A bomb squad was called to inspect a suitcase and a small box found during a sweep of the campus of the Georgia Institute of Technology.

"The items were examined and found to be harmless," the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) said in a terse statement.

The scare came as security forces were in the process of mounding their first day of full-scale protection of the campus where some 14,000 athletes and officials will stay.

It also took place as Atlanta Mayor Bill Campbell, Georgia Gov. Zell Miller and ACOG Chief Billy Payne were attending a ceremony to mark the village's official opening.

There was no sign of increased security or the bomb scare during the ceremony, which

was attended by 200 journalists.

The village, in the centre of Atlanta, is guarded by a 10-foot (three-metre) high chain link fence topped by razor wire and electric fencing.

Details of the incident remained sketchy, with Atlanta city police saying the box and suitcase had been discovered not in the Olympic village but in a retirement home near the Georgia Tech campus.

Terrorist bombings in Saudi Arabia, Oklahoma City and Manhattan have made Olympic security officials hypersensitive to the potential for an attack during the Games, which begin on July 19.

Anti-nuclear protesters said Monday's scare confirmed their worst fears of disaster during the games because of an ageing nuclear reactor situated in the middle of the village.

ACOG and Georgia Tech officials say they have removed the fuel rods from the reactor core to make the area safe for athletes, but anti-nuclear protesters say there was still a huge radioactive inventory on site.

"We are sweating blood," said anti-nuclear campaigner Pamela Blockey-O'Brien. "This aged dump of a nuclear complex in the heart of Olympic venues is a prime terrorist target."

Christie faces Olympic dress rehearsal in Lausanne

LAUSANNE (R) — Linford Christie, now committed to defending his 100 metres title at this month's Olympics Games, will learn on Wednesday whether he still has the speed, power and nerve to destroy his rivals.

Christie, who confirmed his participation in Atlanta Monday, steps on to one of the fastest tracks on the circuit in Lausanne to take on a field which includes the quickest men in the business. It may take a world record to win.

Together with Christie, Canada's world champion Donovan Bailey, American champion Dennis Mitchell and Frankie Fredericks, the fastest men in the world this year, are all scheduled to appear at Europe's second richest meeting.

American Leroy Burrell set the world record of 9.85 at the track two years ago. His mark could be in danger in what is effectively a dress rehearsal for the Olympic final. The ingredients are all there for a fantastic race.

All the athletes know what it is like to go under 10 seconds. There is big money and major pride at

stake with the Olympic Games looming. All that is needed is a calm, warm weather to provide perfect conditions for sprinting.

Christie has been able to go into races this season feeling relaxed in the knowledge that he had not committed himself to Atlanta and he could always say he was only running for fun.

All that changes on Wednesday. The 36-year-old is there to be shot at.

"All season my rivals have been saying I'm going but they were probably hoping at the back of their minds that I wouldn't," he said. "Of course I believe I can win it (in Atlanta)."

The Lausanne meeting is one of Christie's main tests before the Games. He competes at the golden four meeting in Oslo Friday and completes his preparations in London on July 12.

The other highlight of the meeting is American Michael Johnson who will attempt to break the world 400 metres record.

Johnson slashed Pietro Mennea's 17-year-old world 200 metres record at the U.S. Olympic trials last

month and has now set his sights on fellow-American Butch Reynolds's mark of 43.29 seconds set in Zurich eight years ago.

Johnson has tuned his fitness this year for a unique 200-400 metres double at the Olympics. But while he has obviously needed to work hard on his short work for the 200, the American feels his stamina for the 400 is as sharp as ever.

"The 400 record could go," he said. "I'm really looking forward to going out there and running just for fun. They gave me a couple of bottles of champagne after the 200 and I said I wasn't going to open them until I broke the world record in the 400."

World champion Gwelo Torrence takes on Nigerian Mary Onyali in the women's 100 metres while Olympic 400 metres burles gold medalist Sally Gunnell faces her toughest test of the season against Americans Kim Batten and Tooya Buford.

Both women broke Gunnell's world record at last year's Gothenburg World Championships.

Piazza, Griffey leading vote-getters for All-Star Game

NEW YORK (AFP) — Los Angeles Dodgers catcher Mike Piazza and Seattle Mariners outfielder Ken Griffey head the list of starters named Monday for the Major League Baseball All-Star Game.

Piazza, the National League's leading hitter and heart of the division-leading Dodgers, led all NL players in votes (2,272,115) for the first time in his career. The fourth-time all-star outdistanced himself from 1995 votes leader, outfielder Barry Bonds of the San Francisco Giants.

Griffey led all American League vote-getters for the fourth time and the majors for the second time with 3,064,814 votes.

Joining Piazza in the NL infield are Atlanta Braves first baseman Fred McGriff (1,358,094), Houston Astros second baseman Craig Biggio (1,241,228), Cincinnati Reds shortstop Barry Larkin (1,085,711) and Giants third baseman Matt Williams (958,422).

Tony Gwynn of the San Diego Padres (1,485,693) and Dante Bichette of the Colorado Rockies (980,802) round out the outfield.

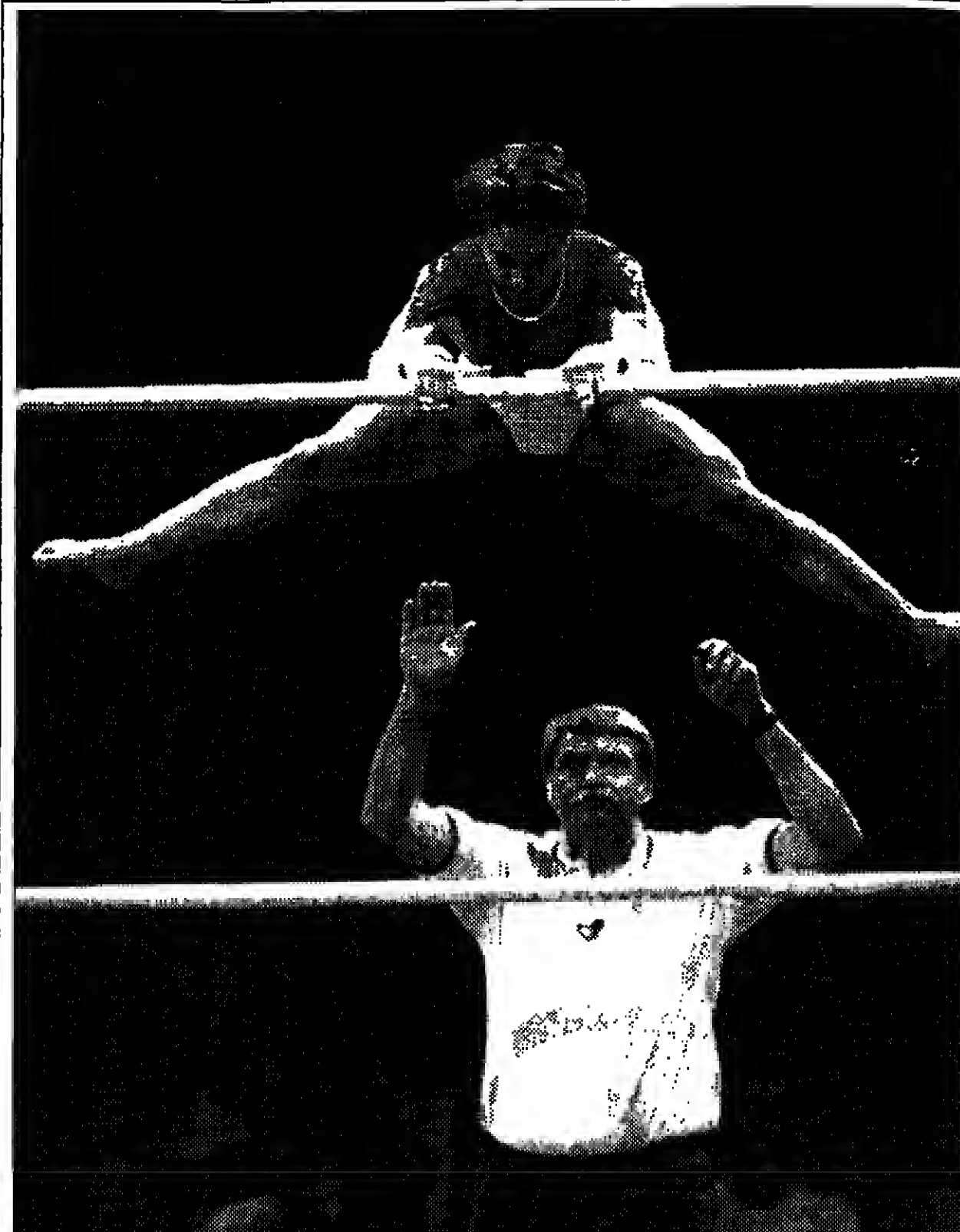
Joining Griffey as starting all-outfielders are Albert Belle (1,692,409) and Kenny Lofton (1,337,252) of the Cleveland Indians.

Baltimore's Brady Anderson, who placed fourth with 1,153,904 votes, is the likely replacement to start for Griffey.

The Orioles' Cal Ripken junior, who starts for the 12th time, heads the all-infield with 2,550,275 votes. He is joined by

teammate and second baseman Roberto Alomar (2,153,993), Chicago White Sox first baseman Frank Thomas (1,215,690), New York Yankees third baseman Wade Boggs (1,282,767) and Texas Rangers catcher Ivan Rodriguez (1,441,920).

Alomar will make his fifth start, Thomas his third, Boggs his 10th and Rodriguez his fourth.



Probable U.S. Olympic Gymnastics coach Bela Karolyi spots his star pupil Kerri Strug as she competes on the uneven bars on her way to winning third place in the U.S. Women's Olympic Gymnastic team trials and a spot on the U.S. Olympic team going to the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, during the final day of the trials in Boston (Reuters photo)

Thousands welcome German heroes home

FRANKFURT (R) — Europe's new soccer champions, Germany, returned home on Monday to a rapturous reception from thousands of flag-waving fans who packed Frankfurt's town centre to welcome their sporting heroes.

Some 30,000 supporters filled the historic Roemerberg Square to see the players, who led the crowd in singing "we are the champions".

From the balcony of the town hall the exhausted-looking team members, showing signs of a hard night's celebrations, held aloft the Henri Delaunay trophy to the roars of the delirious crowd. The players then performed a Mexican wave.

"It's coming home, football's coming home," sang striker Juergen Klinsmann,

giving his own boisterous rendition of the tournament theme song in celebration of Germany's third European championship.

Klinsmann, who came back from injury to captain the Germans to victory in Sunday's final, apologised for his poor tenor voice, which he said was feeling the strain from a night of celebration.

"I'm very proud of Germany, and I think we are going to win the World Cup next," said Christian Borsch, a 12-year-old from Hanau, near Frankfurt.

"This is wonderful, the best atmosphere in Frankfurt since we won the World Cup in 1990," said Oswald Zentlein, a municipal official.

"The reception is totally overwhelming," said match-winner Oliver

Bierhoff, who scored both German goals in their 2-1 win over Czech Republic.

Andreas Moeller, who missed the final through suspension, said: "It was really fun. It is a great thing to be here in Frankfurt and to get a reception like this."

German manager Bert Vogts consoled himself to the crowd when he pushed 13-year-old Matthias Jakob in his wheelchair into the circle of team players to obtain autographs.

Every aspect of the team's arrival in Germany was broadcast live on television, including the 30-minute bus ride from Frankfurt airport to the town centre where supporters had been waiting before the plane had landed.

The players were welcomed at the airport by the mayor of Frankfurt but supporters were encouraged to

stay in the city centre for fear of chaos in the arrivals hall.

Many of the players, including libero Matthias Sammer and defender Dieter Ehlis, had to limp down the gangway nursing the injuries which briefly threatened to leave the team without a full complement of players for the final.

Goalkeeper Andreas Koepke, whose penalty save took Germany through the semifinal against England, carried the championship trophy off the aircraft together with his young daughter.

For part of the flight from London, the Lufthansa jet was escorted by a guard of honour of air force Tornado fighter planes.

Ferrari fight for second best in World Championship

MILAN (AFP) — Ferrari have already lost the World Championship, but they will continue to fight for this season's runners-up slot, team chief Jean Todt insisted on Tuesday.

Todt, the Frenchman drafted in by Ferrari three years ago from Peugeot's racing division, was putting a brave face on his team's dismal performances in recent weeks.

In Sunday's debacle at the French Grand Prix, Michael Schumacher's engine blew on the parade lap and Eddie Irvine's gearbox went after five laps. Only one Ferrari has actually crossed the finishing line in the last four races.

"Williams will win the championship, and we will fight for second place, making substantial progress along the way," Todt declared. "The World Championship did not finish at Magny Cours."

You'll see. Todt admitted he was under pressure, but said: "I knew when I chose Ferrari that I could easily go from sunshine to hell. But I have the support of my chief, my drivers and my squad. We are united."

"The atmosphere here is tense at the moment, but Ferrari are destined to return to the top. If I didn't believe that, I would already have left. We just need time."

"Today, there's the Williams. But we are ahead of the other challengers, and we're the only ones who build their own engine and chassis."

"We try to improve things for every race, but there are always problems and we know that 1996 would be a difficult year."

Todt was also under scrutiny for the tail-fins of the Ferraris in France.

On Irvine's car, it was 15cm too high during practice and the Ulsterman was relegated to the back of the grid. On Schumacher's car, which won pole position, it was found to be the correct height when inspected.

"We've done so many

things to improve the performance, and we're the only constructor to build everything ourselves and challenge the supremacy of the Williams."

Summing up, he told the Gazzetta dello Sport: "From one point of view, we have made progress. Our V10, just to take one example, is excellent. But everything is judged on what's happened in the last minute."

"If we get pole position, we're the best. If Schumacher breaks down, we're the worst and I ought to resign. What would be better, would be if people accepted our qualities and our limitations."

England launch bid to host World Cup in 2006

LONDON (AFP) — England launched its bid to bring the World Cup to its shores in 2006 late Monday following the success of Euro 96, with the Football Association aiming to rival a bid by Germany.

"It's the next logical step for us," said chief executive Graham Kelly. "Nobody can question any longer our ability to stage the biggest sporting events in the world."

UEFA President Lennart Johansson, impressed by "a new spirit of tolerance" in the last three weeks, met with Kelly during the day to discuss England's candidature — which could net the FA a 50 million pound (\$75 million) jackpot.

As the potential next head of world governing body FIFA in 1998, the

Swede's support would be vital.

Earlier, National Heritage Secretary Virginia Bottomley told the House of Commons that the British government would support a bid from the English Football Association "in every way possible".

She praised the "pbe-omonal success" of Euro 96 and added: "To have the World Cup would be a great triumph and a great day for Britain."

But the first battle will be to persuade the Germans, World Cup hosts in 1974, to step aside and concentrate instead on bidding for the European Championships in 2004.

"One of our earliest actions will be to speak to the German FA and advise them that we are

entering the arena," says Kelly.

"We could compete against each other but I know UEFA would not want that," says Kelly. "They would see it as money wasted — you're talking millions of pounds to canvass national associations, put up banners all over the place and adverts in every paper."

The FA must now form an organising committee with Kelly admitting: "We have to do a lot of groundwork between now and 1998 when FIFA will be canvassing bids."

But he believes that the success of Euro 96 can give an English or a shared tournament with Scotland or Wales a head start.

"The behaviour of the fans has been a major

plus and a big talking point within UEFA circles," says Kelly.

"The way the English fans rallied round behind the team made those matches at Wembley very special. To see the fans intermingling and mixing outside the ground was tremendous."

"Football came home. The England team, inspired by Terry Venables and his staff, were a credit to the nation and themselves."

The German team were proud winners and we congratulate them.

"Now the time has come to move ahead swiftly. That's why I'll be making my recommendation on a World Cup bid with huge and justified enthusiasm."

Sports

Premier League

What meet Shabab Al H...

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

Following a week break, the King's Premier League resumes play on Wednesday when Al-Wahdat play new-entrants Shabab Al Hussein in the first of this week's matches.

The rest of the matches to be played Thursday and Friday after the Jordan Federation (JF) will have a new timetable scheduling all games to hold three days a week and of the earlier decision to hold matches on Friday only.

The competition had been off since June 2nd but was not for the past two weeks while the JF met representatives of the clubs to discuss this season's competition.

The week results came as follows:

Al-Hilal 1-0 Al-Wahdat 2-1 Al-Ramtha 2-0 Al-Sadd 2-1 Al-Sadd 2-1 Al-Sadd 2-1

The first leg of the competition will now conclude.

The inter-club for the past two years has been a disappointing result for Arab Cup winners.

They won their first 2-1 over Al-Jazireh in the opening week and a relatively easy opponent Shabab Al Hussein.

Following historic second place

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Premier League resumes today

Wihdat meet Shabab Al Hussein, Jazireh take on Al Faisali

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Following a two-week break, the Kingdom's Premier League competition resumes Wednesday when titleholders Al Wihdat play newcomers Shabab Al Hussein in the first of this week's five matches.

The rest of the matches will be played Thursday and Friday after the Jordan Soccer Federation (JSF) issued a new timetable rescheduling all games to be held three days a week instead of the earlier decision to hold matches on Friday only.

The competition had kicked off June 20 but was halted for the past two weeks while the JSF met with participating club officials to discuss this season's competition.

First week results came as follows:

Faisali - Ahli	1-0
Wihdat - Jazireh	2-1
Ramtha-S.Hussein	2-0
Qadissieh-Qoqazi	2-1
Hussein-Kufroum	0-0

The first leg of the competition will now conclude Sept. 20.

Al Wihdat: The titleholders for the past two years are on a rebound from their recent disappointing results in the Arab Cup Winners' Cup which they hosted last month. They won their first match 2-1 over Al Jazireh in the opening week and have relatively easy opponents in Shabab Al Hussein today.

Al Faisali: Following their historic second place

finish in the Cup Winners' Cup in which they became the first Jordanian team to qualify for the finals, Al Faisali look towards an impressive showing this season. They won the first of the season's titles when they won the Cup Winners' Cup with a 1-0 win over Al Wihdat earlier in the year. They beat Al Ahli 1-0 in the first match and next face Kufroum Thursday.

Al Ramtha: A third place finisher last year, they won the second of this year's titles when they beat Al Hussein to win the Federation Shield earlier this month. They beat Shabab Al Hussein 2-0 in their first match and next face Al Qadissieh Thursday.

Al Hussein: While their first and only major title was the Shield in 1994, Al Hussein have in recent years become a strong contender only to falter in the final rounds and finish among the top teams without actually getting a shot at the title. They were held to a 0-0 draw with Kufroum in the first week and next face newcomers Al Qoqazi Friday.

Al Ahli: One of the veteran teams of the league, they only managed to avoid relegation with a good showing in the final weeks of last year's tournament. Al Ahli lost to Al Faisali in the first week and next play Kufroum Thursday.

Kufroum: For the past seasons, they showed relative consistency by merely holding on to their place in the Premier League. They were held to a goalless

draw against Al Hussein in the first match and next face Al Ahli Thursday.

Al Qadissieh: A team that has ended up closer to the bottom of the league in past seasons beat Al Qoqazi 2-1 in their opening match and next face Al Ramtha in Irbid Thursday.

Al Jazireh: Although somewhat impressive by finishing among the top five for the past two years, their first two matches are against tough teams. They lost to Al Wihdat in their opening match and next face runner up Al Faisali Friday.

Al Qoqazi and Shabab Al Hussein: The two newly promoted teams lost their opening matches. If they appear in the form of usual newly-promoted teams both will be hoping that they score the necessary wins to avoid relegation and maintain their place in the prestigious group whose number has been reduced to ten following a JSF decision to relegate four teams while only promoting two last season.

During the past week, the JSF also issued the timetable for the First Division competition which kicks off July 11 with 14 teams taking part. The top two teams will be promoted to the Premier League while the last two will be relegated to the Second Division.

The competing teams are Al Arabi, Al Russeifa, Shabab, Sarih, Manshih, Thar Ras, Zarga, Yarmouk, Baqaa, Jalil, Awdeh, Turra, Talbieh and Al Karmel.

Jazireh's basketball teams leave for Aleppo today

By Aileen Bannayan Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In preparation for the season's basketball competitions, Al Jazireh's team Wednesday leave for Aleppo, Syria to play a series of matches against top Syrian teams.

The week-long tournament is organized by Aleppo's Al Jala' Club and includes eight teams.

Al Jazireh's men's team will face Syrian champions Al Itihad, runner up

Al Jala', and Al Horrieh. Al Itihad includes Syria's top players, including the agile Mohammed Abu Sa'da who led his team to his country's basketball title last year.

The two other teams have a good line-up as well and are expected to be tough opponents to undermanned Al Jazireh missing a number of players including playmaker Ghaith Ennabi, centre Naser Alawneh, in addition to Ihab Qaddumi and Seif Lada'. Players on the under-18 national team will also be missing the tournament since the Jordan Basketball Federation asked them to continue training with the team currently preparing for the Asian championship later this year.

The team will be led by Husam Lutfi, Yousef Abu Bakir, Ma'an Odeh and Sager Khirfan.

Al Jazireh's women's team will also have difficult opponents in hosts and Syrian champions Al Jala', and all-time rivals Al Horrieh and Al Yarmouk.

The Kingdom's titleholders, had played the three teams on earlier occasions losing to Al Horrieh by four points, beating Al Yarmouk, while losing three matches against Al Jala' who last played in Jordan last summer. Al Jala' then won two encounters and lost the other two to Jordan's national team who were preparing for the Asian Championship in Japan.

The tournament in Aleppo is expected to be a good finale to Al Jazireh's preparations for the country's championship which is scheduled for July 19.

Al Jazireh had clinched the country's women's championship from Al Orthodoxi in 1993 before losing it in 1994 when they pulled out of the championship before reclaiming it last year.

The team includes most of the Kingdom's national players including Rana Hussein, Jumana Salhi, Suhair Makusi, Hala Muheisen, Tala Al Maule, Andeera Qasiesieh, Rania Dejani and Tamera Al Khadra.

Date rewrites history books; Pierce, Pioline out, as McGrath beats Fernandez

LONDON (Agencies) — Kimiko Date became the first Japanese player ever to reach the women's singles semifinals at Wimbledon on Tuesday when she beat 13th-seeded Mary Pierce of France 3-6, 6-3, 6-1.

The 25-year-old Japanese player, who reached the quarterfinals here last year and who is seeded 12th, now faces defending champion Steffi Graf for a place in Saturday's final.

Date is one of only two players who have beaten the German champion this year. She defeated Graf in a Fed Cup clash in Japan in April.

The other player to beat Graf in 1996 was Martina Hingis of Switzerland in the quarter-finals at the Italian Open.

Pierce, whose slow-moving and over-deliberate service action and constant grimacing won few admirers among the 15,000 centre-court crowd, looked to have the match won in the first set as her big groundstrokes found their targets.

But Date's consistency and determination turned the match around in the second.

Date put on the third-seeded 1994 champion Conchita Martinez of Spain in the fourth round.

Meanwhile defending champion Steffi Graf shifted up a gear to leave sixth-seeded opponent Jana Novotna struggling to keep pace in their women's singles quarterfinal clash at Wimbledon Tuesday.

Graf, who is campaigning for a seventh singles title in the world's most prestigious tournament, produced her best tennis of the championships so far to score a 6-3, 6-2 victory in just over one hour.

The 27-year-old German champion now plays Kimiko Date for a place in Saturday's final.

The other semifinalists are fourth-seeded Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain and unseeded Meredith McGrath of the United States.

Sanchez-Vicario recovered from a slow start to see off Judith Wiesner of Austria while Switzerland based McGrath beat ninth-seeded compatriot Mary Joe Fernandez 6-3, 6-1.

Big-serving Richard Krajicek blasted his way into the men's singles quarterfinals at Wimbledon Tuesday by scoring an impressive 6-4, 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 upset victory over tenth-seeded French Open finalist Michael Stich.

The unseeded 24-year-old Dutch player, who had lost in the first-round here on his last two visits, now plays defending champion

Pete Sampras for a place in Friday's semifinals.

Titleholder Pete Sampras blitzed French 16th seed Cedric Pioline 6-4 6-4 6-2 to move ever nearer his fourth successive Wimbledon men's title on Tuesday.

Though he struggled at times with his volleying, the 24-year-old American fired 17 aces and had too many shots for the Frenchman, who failed for the seventh time in as many attempts to come to grips with the power of Sampras.

The top seed's quarterfinal opponent on Wednesday was to be the winner of the big-serving duel later on Tuesday between 1991 champion Michael Stich, the German who is seeded 10th, and dangerous Dutchman Richard Krajicek.

Tall American Todd Martin, the only seed left in the other end of the men's draw, took another step towards a probable spot in the final by completing a 3-6 6-3 7-5 6-2 victory over Swede Thomas Johansson in a match suspended after three sets on Monday.

The 1.98 metre-tall Martin, seeded 13, now faces the new darling of the centre court Tim Henman, who on Monday became the first Briton to reach the last eight in 23 years.

Two more unseeded players, Romanian-born German Alex Radulescu and American Malivi Washington, also reached the last eight and will face each other to ensure that there is an unseeded semifinalist for the first time since John McEnroe in 1992.

Radulescu, a 21-year-old ranked 91st in the world, took his tally of aces to 101, more than any other man so far, as he cruised to a 6-3 6-0 6-4 triumph over South African qualifier Neville Godwin. Godwin had reached the fourth round after Boris Becker withdrew due to a wrist injury during their match last Friday.

"I think I am dreaming and I hope nobody wakes me up," Radulescu, a resident of Bad Homburg, near Frankfurt, said.

Washington progressed at the expense of Dutchman Paul Haarhuis, winning 6-3 6-4 6-2. He has not dropped a set since his first round match against Australian Richard Fromberg.

It is only the second time Washington, ranked 20th, has reached a grand slam quarter-final and this is the first time he has passed the second round at Wimbledon. Sampras put Pioline under immediate pressure by threatening the Frenchman's first two service games, then he broke him



Japan's Kimiko Date celebrates her win at the Wimbledon tennis championships. Date became the first Japanese to reach the semifinals (Reuters photo)

in the fifth game and moved a set in front.

Pioline had some success in the second set by making Sampras stretch for volleys, but the American always had an answer on the big points and was helped to the vital service break in the fifth game again when Pioline double-faulted.

Pioline, who took Boris Becker to five sets last year, could not mount a comeback as the American broke him once more early in the third set. Then it was one-way traffic until Sampras wrapped it up after an hour and 39 minutes.

Navratilova launches record bid

Martina Navratilova came safely through the first round of the mixed-doubles at Wimbledon as she launched her bid for a record-equalling 20th Wimbledon crown.

The 39-year-old Czech-born American joined forces with Jonathan Stark of the United States to beat Australian Andrew Kratzmann and Maria Lindstrom of Sweden 6-3, 3-6, 6-2.

Navratilova, who won her 19th Wimbledon title last year when she and Stark won the mixed doubles, is hoping to equal the 20 Wimbledon title haul of Billie Jean King.

Henman ends British drought as Martinez drifts away

Wimbledon's most inter-

nals. Rain has been a rare visitor to the All England Club in recent times, but until now the drought encountered by British tennis has been relentless and unbreakable.

According to the nation's comedians, the only Brits ever involved in the second week are the ice-cream and strawberry salesmen.

But Henman, straight-backed and serious-minded, is made of sterner stuff and is beginning to invite cautious, if premature, comparisons with a youthful Pete Sampras or Stefan Edberg.

The 21-year-old now faces either American 13th seed Todd Martin or Swede Thomas Johansson and sees no reason why he cannot progress even further in the bottom half of a draw which is wide open.

"Obviously I'm very pleased to be in the quarterfinals but I have to keep looking forward," said Henman, currently ranked 62nd in the world.

"I was pleased with the way I was able to take my chances. There are still some very good players left in the draw but I keep playing the way I have I think I have a good chance of winning again."

Gustafsson, ranked 37th, had suggested his young opponent had elements of Sampras in his make-up, and the way the youngster reacted at moments of stress was worthy of the reigning champion.

Australian Jason Stoltenberg also advanced to his first Grand Slam quarterfinal, beating Switzerland's Jakob Hlasek 6-2 7-6 6-2.

Stoltenberg was 4-0 down in the second set only to be saved by a rain break. "The rain really helped. It was the turning point. I was going down and was able to get away, regroup and come back."

The conqueror of Monica Seles, Katarina Stutenkova of Slovakia, went down to Meredith McGrath to set up an all-American quarterfinal with Mary Joe Fernandez, while Austria's Judith Wiesner will be Sanchez, Vicario's opponent.

The departure of Martinez, though, appears to make life easier for Graf in the top half.

The situation in the men's draw, from which 10 seeds including Andre Agassi, French Open champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov, Stefan Edberg, and the injured Boris Becker made first-week exits, is even bleaker.

Goran Ivanisevic, a four-set winner over Australian Pat Rafter, is the only seed definitely through to the last eight with five fourth-round men's results still outstanding.

GOREN BRIDGE

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HEARKEN TO THE STORY

North-South vulnerable South deals

NORTH
AKQ84
Q932
J106
J4

WEST EAST
AJ105 9873
K64 762
K8652 AJ10973

SOUTH
CAJ1085
AQ9543
AQ

The bidding: WEST NORTH EAST
10 Pass 1NT Pass
11 Pass 47 Pass

Opening lead: Five of ♠

If there is one word that is the embodiment of winning bridge, it would be "count." That applies to both the distribution of the unseen hands and to their strength. Much can be learned from both.

When West interposed a takeout double, North saw no reason to introduce a four-card major (those were the suits West was likely to hold), opting instead for one no trump. But after South aggressively reversed with two hearts, North wanted no time in making sure that the major-suit game was reached.

West led a low club to East's ace, and declarer ruffed the club return. A low spade was led. West shot up with the ace and exited with a spade to dummy's queen, declarer discarding a diamond. Not unexpectedly, the trump finesse lost to the king, completing the defensive book.

West exited with a trump, taken in a dummy. The jack of diamonds was led but, instead of making the percentage play of the finesse, declarer rose with the ace. When the king dropped, declarer drew the last trump and claimed. Did South peek, or was declarer a very good player?

Congratulations if you selected a very good player. There was no way the diamond finesse could succeed, and declarer knew it.

East had already shown up with four points by winning the first trick with the ace of clubs, and surely held at least five clubs. If East held shortness in hearts and the king of diamonds as well, would that defender have passed meekly over North's one no trump? "Not bloody likely!" Taking the diamond finesse would have been an act of masochism. The only hope was to find West with a singleton king.

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